

WALSALL CHRONICLE

Thursday, April 4, 2013

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Shop shock

A new loading ban
stuns worried traders

See Page 9



Talented trio

Town searches for its
own top entertainers

Focus – Page 22



Saddlers surge

Now the play-offs are
up for grabs says Smith

Sport – Pages 47 & 48



Tears as RBL social club has to close

A LONG established Royal
British Legion club in
Bloxwich has closed its doors
for the final time after more
than half a century.

Bosses finally called time
on the Bloxwich Royal
British Legion social club, in
Broad Lane Gardens, after
57 years.

Spiralling costs and the
dwindling numbers of
members have been blamed
for the closure.

More than 100 people
turned up on Saturday night
to bid a fond farewell to the
community venue.

It has hosted bingo ses-
sions, meetings, car boot
sales and other functions.

Generations

One of the most loyal sup-
porters of the club is Minnie
White, aged 83, of Hilton
Close. She has attended the
club over the past 54 years
along with four generations
of her family.

"We've had some really
happy times here,"
said the great-grandmother-
of-13, wiping the tears from
her eyes. "I don't know
where I'll go now."

"It used to be chockablock
in this place but the atmo-
sphere now has completely
changed," she added.

"Everyone used to know
each other."

The building was being
boarded up this week after
closing its doors for the final
time on Sunday evening.

But the Bloxwich branch
of the Royal British Legion
is unaffected by the social
club's closure.

Fans ejected from stadium

TROUBLE flared at
Walsall's Midlands derby
against Coventry City.

A handful of supporters
were ejected from the
Banks's Stadium during
Walsall's 4-0 victory over the
Sky Blues, which was
watched by a bumper Bescot
crowd of 7,500 fans.

Police were still continu-
ing investigations into the
trouble on Tuesday
although no arrests had yet
been made.

COUNCIL IN TALKS ON 20MPH LIMITS

Report by Craig Hughes

**MORE 20mph restrictions could be imposed in residential
areas across Walsall borough in a bid to slow down traffic
and also to improve safety for pedestrians.**

A review of speed limits has been launched by Walsall Council which has seen 24 requests for action on roads across the borough in the last three years. Around £25,000 has been set aside to assess the impact of signed 20mph zones and speed limits around the borough.

Transport chief Councillor Tom Ansell said concerns had been raised about speeding motorists but stressed reductions would have to be ratified by the Department for Transport. He added that 20mph zones had already proved successful in some areas.

Councillor Ansell said: "We are looking at the 20mph zones being created. We have got some areas in the past where we have done 20mph zones. It does give people more confidence they can get about safer without speeding traffic."

The majority of calls for improvements have been for traffic calming or reduced speed limits. The most recent requests for action have included for a one-way system in Hannah Road, Darlaston.

Walsall Council has 20mph limits in place on 550 roads, covering around 18 per cent of the total streets in the borough.

Steps have already been taken to slow down drivers on some of the borough's main routes. The 40mph speed limit was cut to 30mph along Wolverhampton Road, which links the town centre to Junction 10 of the M6, and Sutton Road which runs from the Broadway to Pheasey.

Congestion

The limit was also lowered from 60mph to 40mph along Norton Road from Yorks Bridge to the Staffordshire boundary.

It comes as council chiefs are looking at major road projects. Up to £25 million could be pumped into improving the road network around junction 10 of the M6 in a bid to increase traffic flow.

One of the options could see carriageways widened to ease congestion towards the town centre and the proposed Darlaston Enterprise Zone.

The motorway is regularly used by 160,000 motorists a day and traffic can build up around Wolverhampton Road and the Black Country Route.

A further £10m will be ploughed into Lichfield Road, a main route between the town centre and Brownhills, under the initial plans.

It could see signalised junctions created, pedestrian crossing points added and better bus stops installed.

Areas earmarked for improvements include the Melish Road roundabout, along with the Salters Road and Shire Oak traffic lights.

Puppets pack them in



Chris Brown, from Mr Brown's Pig Puppets, performing at the Easter fun day which proved a huge success at the Walsall Leather Museum in Littleton Street, Walsall

HUNDREDS flocked to Walsall Leather Museum for an Easter family fun day as a cold holiday weekend led to a bumper crop of visitors.

Museum bosses said the Littleton Street attraction had been busier than last year, when the country was basking in warm weather compared with this Easter's freeze.

A puppet show, magic and a circus act were all laid on for the crowds, as families filed through the doors in their hundreds.

Mr Brown's Pig Puppet show was one of the biggest hits of the day, delighting youngsters.

Francesca Cox, curator at the Leather Museum, said: "The day was a big success. It was really busy and didn't let up all day. The puppet show was really popular, you could hear all the children shouting along."

And children got crafty when they made bird masks with help from a professional artist and made their leather mementos.

Hospital A&E unit is under pressure

WALSALL Manor has "really struggled to cope" with demand in its Accident & Emergency department, its chief executive admitted, as figures revealed admissions had increased by almost 3,000 patients compared to last year.

The number of people requiring urgent care between last April and February this year rose by an average of more than 220 a month, new figures reveal.

It comes as the hospital faces more pressures in its A&E department because of the proposed downgrade of Stafford and Cannock Hospitals.

Wolverhampton's New Cross Hospital will also have to take on extra patients.

Significant

Walsall Manor chief executive Richard Kirby said: "The trust has experienced a significant increase in emergency admissions above both planned levels and last year's out-turn.

"Overall emergency admissions have risen by 14 per cent compared to last year. This increase in activity has put significant pressure on both hospital and community services.

"The increase in activity has also had an effect on our ability to deliver on some of our key priorities including the A&E four hour standard."

A total of 80 new nurses and healthcare assistants are being recruited by the trust to increase resources.

Charity boost at Ryan's day

A CHARITY fun day in memory of Bloxwich motorcyclist Ryan Husted has raised hundreds of pounds for charity.

More than £500, raised through a series of activities at The Sneyd pub in Vernon Way, Bloxwich, will be donated to the Air Ambulance. Around 100 people turned up to the event on Saturday, which saw a variety of activities put on by the pub including a disco.

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Old market set to be events venue

SUMMER and Christmas events will be held on the site of the former Brownhills Market, under new plans.

It is also hoped a rundown shopping area in the town could be turned into a civic space, with the old artwork being taken away and empty units given a new lease of life. An events calendar will be drawn up, with festivals to be held in the

summer and over the festive period. Walsall council chiefs will approach businesses for their backing.

Potential sites identified by officers include the former Brownhills Market site and Ravenscourt.

Town centre regeneration officer Nikki Rolls said the proposals had been drawn up to attract more traders and visitors to the town. "We're trying to come up with

innovative ideas to bring people into the town," Mrs Rolls said. "We understand Brownhills High Street is in need of some severe regeneration, such as the Ravenscourt area."

"There's been a lot of artwork pieces put in there that are at least 30 years old. They haven't been managed or maintained and they are no longer fit for purpose."

"This is not a thriving area, so we

plan to remove the artwork and use the area as a civic space. It's a safe pedestrianised area, so we could use this to bring up footfall."

She added: "We're trying to get businesses to take ownership."

After winning a silver award at the Heart of England in Bloom competition last year, the Town Centre Partnership is looking to revamp the area in a bid to win another this year.

Singing postman who hopes for red letter day

WALSALL'S singing postman is celebrating after delivering some knock-out performances to reach the semi-finals of a top talent contest.

Nathan Farrell said the past 12 months had been "amazing" after he got to the latter stages of a string of competitions by wowing judges with his vocal talents.

Prison for drinker who refused to leave toilet

A MAN who got drunk, locked himself in a toilet and refused to leave has been jailed for 20 weeks.

Robert Jeffery, aged 28, of Temple Bar, Willenhall, admitted breaching an anti-social behaviour order for a third time in less than a year when he appeared at Walsall Magistrates Court last week.

Police went to Willenhall Health Centre, Field Street at about 5.45pm on February 25 and found him refusing to leave a toilet.

Mrs Maggie Meakin, prosecuting, said Jeffery had been on a drinking binge.

"When he came out he was frothing at the mouth and swore at police officers," she said.

"In interview he stated he had been drinking all day and that he thought his order had come to an end."

Mr Chris Loach, for Jeffery, said he mumbled a swear word but not at officers.

He said: "When arrested he apologised for what he did. He has ongoing alcohol problems."

Jailing Jeffery District Judge Michael Morris said: "We have a duty to protect the public so a custodial sentence is inevitable."

The 27-year-old can barely complete his post rounds without somebody asking him for a rendition of their favourite tunes.

The father-of-two said: "When I'm out doing my rounds some people do recognise me and they say 'it's the singing postman'. Then they ask me to give them a tune."

Mr Farrell has been a postman for the past nine years but dreams of launching a singing career.

His latest success has seen him win a place in the regional semi-finals of Britain Does Variety.

His version of the Elton John song I Guess That's Why They Call it the Blues wowed judges and he bagged a place in the semi-finals, also being held in Kettering.

Better

This time he is planning to sing the Frank Sinatra classic New York, New York.

If successful, he will get through to the finals and be in with the chance of winning the top title after reaching the finals last year.

"This year I want to go one better and get one of the prizes," he said.

The former Willenhall Comprehensive School pupil, who is father to Casey, almost one, and two-year-old Connor, said he was still dreaming of the big time.

"I just really enjoy singing," he said.

"The successes I've had over the past 12 months and all the support I've had have given me so much experience and lots more confidence."

He is hoping to try out for the X Factor later this year.



Walsall's singing postman Nathan Farrell gets ready to perform in the finals

Hunt for new college principal

A SECOND multi-million-pound University Technical College, which could help to lay the foundations of a career in construction for hundreds of teenagers across the region, is now searching for a principal.

The £8 million West Midlands Construction UTC is earmarked to open in Vernon Way, Bloxwich, in September 2014.

The new UTC will cater for 600 14 to 19-year-olds. It will share a site with the £9.5m

Black County UTC, which specialises in engineering.

It has the support of major construction contractors, including Balfour Beatty, Barhale Construction, Hewden, Lovell Partnerships Ltd and Wilmott Dixon.

All of these organisations have pledged to support students with mentoring, work experience and project-based learning support.

Approval for plans to widen cul-de-sac

PLANS to create extra parking spaces and widen a cul-de-sac in Walsall have been given the go-ahead.

Extra room for emergency vehicles to get through Woodward's Place, Alumwell, will be created as part of the plans by Walsall Housing Group.

The road wraps around a central grassed area but because it's cars find it difficult to pass. Vehicles blocking part of the carriageway.

The application creates parking spaces on the central island with 23 additional plots to serve the 18 properties.

It says: "The parking spaces have been laid out around the turning circle, meaning that residents can see their cars from their windows with ease. Being close to their properties, it is hoped that this will encourage those with cars to use the new spaces rather than parking on the road."

The proposal has received planning permission under delegated powers.

Walsall Council head of planning David Elsworth said the plan would allow better access for refuse and emergency vehicles and improve safety.

Go-ahead for flats scheme

BUILDING 18 flats in Bloxwich will help bring "urban land back into use," council chiefs have said.

A scheme for a two-storey block at the former Frances Sharpe House, Kempthorne Gardens, has been given the go-ahead by Walsall Council.

Wilmott Dixon Wtd is due to carry out the work on behalf of Walsall Housing Group to provide bed-sit flats for the elderly.

Head of planning David Elsworth said: "The site was previously developed for residential purposes and the proposals will bring this vacant urban land back into use."

Death mystery

MYSTERY surrounds the death of a man found at his Walsall home. The partially decomposed body of Paul Gillingham, 46, was discovered in Scarborough Close, Pleck, last August. Black Country Coroner Robin Balmain recorded an open verdict at an inquest at Walsall Coroner's Court.

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£14,000 fraud on pharmacy business

A FINANCE controller pocketed more than £14,000 from a pharmacy where he worked by altering 20 separate cheques, a court heard.

Michael Bull, of Bloxwich, stole the cash while working at Jhoots Pharmacy's head office in Darlaston, Walsall Magistrates Court heard last week.

Mrs Rachael Smith, prosecuting, said the 30-year-old worked in the company's finance department and one of his duties was filling out cheques to pay suppliers.

The cheques would then be signed by the firm's managing director but afterwards Bull would erase the correct payee details and replace it with M Bull or T Millington, his wife's maiden name.

Altered

He was caught when a supplier contacted the company requesting payment on an invoice in January this year. It emerged the cheque, which had been signed to pay them, had been altered and an internal investigation was carried out at Jhoots Pharmacy. It was found that a total of 20 cheques had been falsified and Bull had stolen a total of £14,196.05.

Mrs Smith said the first five had been changed to pay M Bull, while the following 15 had been altered to pay T Millington.

Mrs Smith said: "He was in a position of trust within the finance department and he breached that trust."

Bull, of Harden Road, pleaded guilty to a charge of fraud by abuse of position and another of concealing criminal property, dating back to between January and December last year.

Magistrates committed the case to Wolverhampton Crown Court for sentence on April 29. Bull was released on unconditional bail until then.

Uni helping the Saddlers

AN agreement has been signed between the University of Wolverhampton and Walsall Football Club to provide fitness and psychological support to players.

Sports scientists from the university will provide fitness monitoring and agility testing to around 130 players associated with the Saddlers, aged nine to 18.

First glimpse of town's new Vue cinema



An artist's impression of the nine-screen Vue cinema

DEVELOPERS have revealed the first image of a nine-screen cinema due to open in Walsall town centre in autumn 2014.

The Vue cinema will take up the top floor of the Littleton Centre, a new development on a derelict patch of land next to the new Tesco Extra store. The complex will also feature cafes and restaurants on the ground floor.

Tom Wilcox of Stourbridge-based developer, Cordwell Property Group, said the development would bring a host of benefits to Walsall.

"The new image is an accurate representation of how the Littleton Centre will look" he said.

"It will be a bright, contemporary addition to the town's leisure facilities and is in an ideal position to attract people at all times of the day."

Jobs

"It will boost the town's regeneration and bring up to 200 jobs for local people with many more created during the construction programme."

He added: "It will be an iconic gateway statement to the town centre."

An application was submitted to Walsall Council and is due to be considered in May. If approved, work will start on the site within three months.

Plans are also in the pipeline for a development at Walsall Waterfront which will feature a nine-screen Odeon cinema, bars and restaurants.

Walsall town centre has not had a picture house since the Cannon Cinema in Park Street closed down in 1993.

Body cameras to be used in a crackdown on litterbugs

HEAD and body cameras will be trialled by enforcement staff in Walsall to catch litterbugs who dump rubbish. The 30-day trial will begin at the end of this month.

It is part of a raft of measures being considered to clean up the borough, as it emerged cleaning the streets of Walsall is costing £1.75 million a year.

Cameras are being tried out to act as a deterrent and to capture footage which could go on to be used as evidence in prosecutions.

All park rangers will also be trained in issuing fixed penalty notices to people who drop litter or cause anti-social behaviour in parks.

Councillor Zahid Ali, cabinet member for public protection, said: "The introduction of head and body cameras is something we are interested in exploring to see if it supports officers to compile the evidence needed to pursue action against offenders and also act as a deterrent."

Decide

"We will be undertaking a 30-day borough wide trial of head and body cameras, starting at the end of April, to evaluate their effectiveness and decide if this is something we wish to move forward with."

The trial of head and body cameras will be free for the month long trial. If successful, 16 officers would be equipped with cameras, costing £2,366 for head cams and £2,982 for body cams.

More than 20 people were given £80 bills and five face prosecution as part of the crackdown on littering in Walsall.

Council enforcement officers investigated almost 80 complaints of litter in the last 12 months as bosses seek to clean up the town.

An annual enforcement

report for 2012/13 has shown more than a dozen patrols were carried out. More are expected this year.

In his report David Elrlington, area manager for environmental health, said: "Enforcement officers investigated 78 complaints about litter. They conducted 16 joint litter patrols with the police in Walsall town centre, Aldridge, Calmore, Bloxwich, Willenhall and Brownhills which resulted in the issue of 23 fixed penalty notices and two juvenile warning letters to parents."

"There are currently five pending prosecutions in respect of littering offences."

He added: "The maximum fine for a litter offence is £2,500. However, the council may issue a fixed penalty as an alternative to prosecution. In Walsall fixed penalties for litter are set at £80."

Walsall Council is planning to increase patrols at 'grot spots'. Businesses will also be urged to put up wall ash trays to stop cigarettes being dropped.

Meanwhile, around 14 tons of waste was cleared in Walsall during a clean up exercise around the Greenrock Estate. It involved enforcement officers, Walsall Housing Group, Street Pride police and borough's Litter Hit squad.



From left, Alicia Dingle, Holly Price, Lauren Rattenbury and Caitlin Mulry, all aged 10, from St Michael's School in Pelsall, are celebrating making national swimming finals

Girls reach final

FOUR schoolchildren from Walsall have won places in a national swimming competition.

St Michael's CE Primary School pupils Alicia Dingle, Lauren Rattenbury, Caitlin Mulry and Holly Price, all aged 10, are members of Walsall Swimming Club.

The youngsters from Pelsall will be representing the West Midlands at the England Schools Primary Team Championships in Sheffield in June.

The team won their places at a district competition at Bromsgrove School and competed against pupils from Birmingham, Wolverhampton and surrounding counties. Pupils from the best three primary schools went through to the national championships. The girls came second in the finals of the freestyle relay and medley relays behind Bromsgrove School.

Valda Davies, secretary of Walsall Swimming Club, said: "It is a huge achievement for the girls and is probably the first time any team in any sport from St Michael's has competed at national level."

Headteacher Ros Hutchinson added: "I am incredibly proud of them."

NEWS in brief

Driving refresher for the over 50s

OLDER drivers in Walsall can put themselves on the road to success with a free safety course next month.

The Driving Safer for Longer course is being rolled out across the Black Country by Dudley Council with support from Walsall's road safety team and aims to boost safety for motorists aged 50 and over. The course will focus on safety and awareness skills and refresh 'knowledge of the Highway Code. Support will be provided by the Institute of Advanced Motorists and West Midlands Fire Service.

It is being held on April 20 at the Holiday Inn in Bentley from 9.30am to 12.30pm. Call 01384 815433 to book.

Machine plants 4,000 park bulbs

A TOTAL of 4,000 bulbs have been planted at a Darlaston park.

A specialist machine was brought over from Holland to plant the bulbs at Kings Hill Park. It is believed it is the first time the machine has been used in England.

They have been planted on a bank at the park, close to its bowling green.

Councillor Paul Bott, chairman of the Friends of Darlaston South parks, said: "A variety of flowers have been planted. The machine cuts down on labour so it means the bulbs were all planted in just one day."

Centre for teens is in the pipeline

A NEW residential school for teenagers with learning difficulties could open in Walsall, under plans which will also create six jobs.

The plans, which have been lodged with Walsall Council, would transform a building in Adams Road, Walsall Wood. There would be space for 10 residential students and 14 day students.

A decision on the planning application is yet to be made.

Pensioner died after hospital fall

A FORMER postman died as a result of an accident after a fall at Walsall Manor Hospital, an inquest heard.

Pensioner Jonathan Cross of Gurney Road, Beechdale, suffered respiratory failure and an injured lung.

The 76-year-old died in hospital on March 16 and a verdict of accidental death was recorded.

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NEWS

THE BEST OF PETER RHODES



DAVID Miliband is quitting British politics to become president and chief executive of the International Rescue Committee which is apparently in New York. Own up. How many of us thought it was based on Tracy Island?

□□□□□□□□

ED MILIBAND says the political scene will be "a poorer place" without his brother David. This is the same Ed Miliband who stabbed David in the back to get the Labour leadership. "Breathtaking gall" doesn't even begin to describe it.

□□□□□□□□

TALKING of warring families with a tendency to impale each other on sharp objects, I was at Stratford this week for a memorable Hamlet starring Jonathan Slinger as the Dane. There aren't many laughs in it but the one about the Brits never fails. Hamlet appears to be going mad and his stepfather packs him off to England. Why England? The gravedigger explains: "He shall recover his wits there; or, if he do not, it's no great matter (because) there the men are as mad as he."

□□□□□□□□

A SCHOOL in Essex has banned triangular flapjacks after one was thrown, hurting a pupil. A reader says this should be only the beginning of the campaign to stamp out three-sided foodstuffs: "What about Dairyella segments, Toblerone and those green chocolate triangles in Quality Street? Lethal."

□□□□□□□□

ALTERNATIVELY, perhaps the school could try to do something to prevent its pupils from throwing food at each other. Go on, call me a rabid old reactionary.

□□□□□□□□

MEANWHILE, back at the Royal Shakespeare Theatre, traditional applause was drowned out by some theatregoers whooping while others whistled through their fingers or stood up and clapped with arms fully extended, blocking the view of those behind. It is selfish, show-offish and quite unnecessary for there is nothing more potent at the end of a great show than the mighty crescendo of 1,000 pairs of hands. Perhaps the whoopers and whistlers would be happier following baseball.

□□□□□□□□

A 14-YEAR-OLD girl is savaged to death by four dogs and the old, old cry goes up: "It's not the breed, it's the owners." So why was no-one surprised when we heard that the breeds in this tragedy were bull mastiffs and Staffordshire bull terriers?

□□□□□□□□

NURSES are to be taught how to nurse. A nation rejoices. But while it may seem commonsense to put trainee nurses on wards and teach them the basics of feeding, washing and toilet care, there is one problem. It is the worrying fact that a certain percentage of the population are not caring people. And as anyone in the NHS will tell you, a number of these people, who should never be allowed within a mile of sick and vulnerable people, somehow gravitate into the medical profession, both on the wards and in management. They are brusque and unkind. But above all they are bullies and they can quickly browbeat and corrupt younger, better health workers. While the latest back-to-basics scheme is to be commended, it will not produce kinder wards until NHS bosses deal with the bullies.

Don't miss Peter Rhodes every Monday to Friday in your Express & Star

Charity cash rolls in for casino staff

MEMBERS of staff at a Walsall casino have helped in a campaign to raise £1 million for the Marie Curie Cancer Care charity.

The partnership between the charity and the Rank Group, which owns Grosvenor Casinos and Mecca, began in January 2010 and saw the Walsall Grosvenor G Casino in Bentley Mill Way hold many activities to raise £4,181 so far. Some of

the staff did a 1,000-mile bike ride from Aberdeen to Brighton and there was also a Be Gorgeous night and poker nights.

Walsall general manager Matt Rudd said: "It's amazing to know that we've contributed to raising such a massive amount of money for Marie Curie."

"There are no words to describe how important the work they do is

and we're all thrilled at the result. "I'd like to say a massive thanks to our team members for giving up their time and putting so much effort into raising money."

"Also, let's not forget our kind-hearted customers, who were nothing short of fantastic when it came to getting behind the team's efforts."

Community fundraiser for Marie

Curie, Alysia Cameron-Price, praised the efforts of staff and customers.

She added: "Team members and customers at Grosvenor G Casino in Walsall can be very proud of what they have achieved. Their outstanding support has helped fund an incredible 50,000 hours of free Marie Curie nursing care for people with a terminal illness."

Helping drivers on road to safety

OLDER drivers in Walsall can put themselves on the road to success with a free safety course this month.

The Driving Safer for Longer course is being rolled out across the Black Country by Dudley Council with support from Walsall's road safety team and aims to boost safety for drivers aged 50 and over.

It will offer help and advice about driving to give people confidence and dispel some of the myths surrounding older drivers.

The course will focus on a range of safety and awareness skills and refresh drivers' knowledge of the Highway Code and general motoring skills.

Support will be provided by representatives from the Institute of Advanced Motorists and West Midlands Fire Service.

Walsall's transport councillor Tom Ansell praised the initiative and urged people in the borough to take advantage of the course.

It will run on April 20 at the Holiday Inn in Bentley from 9.30am to 12.30pm. Call 01384 815433 to book.

Reshaping ideas sought

A SIX-WEEK public consultation over planning policies shaping regeneration in Walsall is being held.

Feedback is being sought on the Walsall Site Allocation Document and town centre Area Action Plan.

Senior planning policy officer Charis Blythe said: "The Walsall Site Allocation Document is a long-term plan that identifies land for development and for protection across the borough."

"The Area Action Plan (AAP) is a long-term plan, which will allocate sites within the town centre for the development of new shops, leisure opportunities and offices."

Visit the www.walsall.gov.uk/planningwebsite.

Race probe bail

A MAN from Willenhall has been arrested on suspicion of inciting racial hatred. Police said he had been detained in connection with material posted on the internet.

Officers said the material was suspected of being of an extreme right-wing nature. The 23-year-old was bailed pending further inquiries.

Trains departed when the Beeching Axe fell

IT'S 50 years since the Beeching Axe swung down on Britain's railways.

When Richard Beeching was head-hunted from ICI to become the first head of the new British Railways board in 1961, most people realised a big shake-up was in the offing.

But even so, nobody saw this coming. Beeching's report, The Reshaping of British Railways, called for more than half of Britain's railway stations to close, and nearly a third of Britain's train lines.

And the Black Country, including Walsall, was hit as hard as anywhere. Some of the closures were inevitable but Beeching went further, much further.

While most people expected that some of the smaller towns would lose their rail links, he proposed the closure of all passenger services to Dudley and Walsall.

Cannock, Aldridge and Wednesbury would also lose their stations, along with Darlaston, West Bromwich and Great Bridge.

Operates

In total, Beeching proposed the closure of nearly 2,000 stations across the UK, with the loss of 5,000 miles of railway track and 40,600 jobs.

Four months earlier, Anthony Thomas became one of the country's youngest station masters when he took over Ettingshall Road and Bilston station. Beeching proposed that his station should close too.

There were one or two stations that got away. Walsall station never did close, and to this day operates services to Wolverhampton.

At the time he took over, Britain's railways were a mish-mash of disjointed services which had been set up by small entrepreneurs in Victorian times.

At the same time, post-war Britain saw considerable expansion in car ownership, and by 1961, British Railways was reported to be losing £300,000 every day – or around £5.4 million if you adjust for inflation.

While most people recognised that modernisation was necessary, nobody was prepared for the cuts which Beeching proposed. But he



How Pelsall Station used to look



The station site is now a footpath

A WINDING path through the woodland is all that is left of Pelsall's once bustling railway station, 48 years after it fell victim to the Beeching axe. The station was originally operated by South Staffordshire Railway, as part of a route that ran from Wolverhampton to Burton. The line was then taken over by LNWR, before being absorbed into the London Midland & Scottish in 1923. Along with the other stations on the line, it closed in 1965, but the route continued to operate for through traffic until 1983, 20 years after Beeching.

He had wanted all services to Walsall to end, but while the planned closure of the Birmingham line never went ahead, there was no reprieve for the Pelsall route. Today the old track-bed forms part of a nature walk between Walsall and Brownhills, but there is no hint of the site's past. The station's demolition total, and trees grow where the platform once stood.

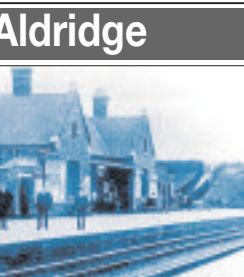
was not just an axeman. He recommended heavy investment in the remaining lines, which ultimately resulted in the electrification of the Wolverhampton to Birmingham line, but his proposals to invest in improved bus services to replace the lost railways were ignored by successive governments of both political parties.

And while the cuts did save money, Beeching never did succeed

in stemming the huge losses of British Railways, with the closure of branch lines meaning that fewer people used the remaining routes.

Transport Minister Barbara Castle effectively conceded the railways would always need some kind of public subsidy in the pages of the 1968 Transport Act.

Today, most of the talk surrounds which of the Beeching cuts can be reversed. The stations at Cannock



Aldridge Station as it was in the past



Aldridge Station as it looks today

TODAY, a few bricks are all that remain of Aldridge station. Aside from the occasional rumble of a passing goods train, there is little to hint that this was once the bustling junction where the Castle Bromwich-to-Walsall route met the Brownhills branch line. The station opened with the Walsall and Midland Junction railway in 1872.

The Brownhills branch was added 10 years later, initially for goods services only, with passenger services coming a couple of years later. The station closed when passenger services ended in 1965, and has since been completely demolished.

As well as the double-gabled station building, there was also a goods shed, the site of which is now occupied by an industrial site and housing estate. In recent years there has been talk of reinstating passenger services and building a new station, but the funding has yet to be secured.

and Hednesford reopened during the 1980s, and there are further plans to reinstate many of the services that were lost.

Proposals have also been drawn up to reopen the Stourbridge-Dudley-Walsall line for use by a new generation of "tram trains", which can run on both conventional rail tracks and tramlines in town centres.

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Paige puts on concert for charity

A WILLENHALL schoolgirl is hoping for a full house as she hosts a gospel concert in aid of orphans in Rwanda.

Paige Falconer, aged 17, will be among a party of young Christians to lend a hand on the Komera project which is being supported by Methodist churches in the Wolverhampton and Shrewsbury District.

The fundraising concert is due to be held on April 27 at 7pm at the New Testament Church of God, Upper Lichfield Street, Willenhall.

It will include performances from the Black Country Community Gospel Choir, Cie, Philippa Hanna, Witness Dis, Janine Dyer and Annette B.

St Thomas More Catholic School pupil Paige is due to travel to the African state with a group from St John's Methodist Church, in Bloxwich, which supports children's projects in remote communities.

Tickets for the event cost £6.50 in advance or £7.50 on the door, with all proceeds going towards funding the projects.

For more information or to book call 07960 536131.

Festival set to pull in beer lovers

LOVERS of real ale will have the chance to vote for their favourite tippie at Walsall's annual beer festival this week.

Walsall CAMRA will be holding the popular beer festival at the Town Hall from today (Thursday) until Saturday providing more than 100 regional brews along with 25 ciders, food and tombola.

Music will be provided by the Grey Goose Blues Band on Friday and organist Martin Atterbury and Radiohound on Saturday.

After counting up the votes, one beer will emerge as the champion and be crowned beer of the festival.

Entrance to CAMRA members is £1 and to members of the armed forces £2 with non members paying £3. Visit www.walsallcamra.org/beer-festivals for more information.

Plea over death

A CORONER is appealing for family members to come forward after the death of a man from Walsall. Christopher Smith, aged 58, of Bath Road, died on March 25. Anyone with information is asked to call 0845 352 7490.

School-run bus boss did not have licence

A BOSS of a minibus hire firm who was caught driving children to a school in Walsall without a valid operator's licence has been handed a court bill of more than £340.

The Ford 16-seater vehicle, which was ferrying pupils to Mary Elliot School, was inspected by officers from the Vehicle and Operator Services Agency in Leamore Lane on October 29 last year, Walsall Magistrates Court heard last week.

Mr James Phillips, prosecuting on behalf of VOSA, said during the roadside check Amjid Parveez, from Hotline Minibuses,

confirmed he was the owner and operator of the vehicle. However, it was discovered the operator's licence on display was in the name of the 35-year-old's brother-in-law, Mohammed Hanif, who previously owned the business. If a vehicle is designed or adapted to carry nine or more passengers and does so for hire or reward it must have a public service vehicle operator's licence.

The licences are regulated by independent traffic commissioners and make sure the public service vehicle is being used in a safe and proper way.

Mr Phillips said: "He confirmed he did not

have an operator's licence in his name and was displaying his brother-in-law's licence."

Parveez, of Rosamond Street, Palfrey, admitted operating a public service vehicle without an operator's licence during yesterday's hearing.

Mr Mohammed Fiaz, defending, said Hotline Minibuses had been running for a number of years and previously the owner and proprietor of the business was Mr Hanif, Parveez's brother-in-law.

He said the role Parveez previously had was as a transport manager and he had not been involved in the ownership. He told the

court that Mr Hanif decided not to carry on his role in the firm six months ago, allowing Parveez to take on the more senior post.

"When that did happen, he did not change the operator's licence to his name," Mr Fiaz said.

He added that Parveez had 'overlooked' the issue and the firm had now lost the minibus hire contract with the school, costing the business a significant sum of money.

Mr Fiaz said Parveez hoped to get an operator's licence soon. He was fined £165, with £159 costs and a £20 victim surcharge.

Like mother, like daughter as beauties beat the bullies

LINDA Peach could understand what her daughter Charlotte was going through when bullies gave her a tough time at school – she too had suffered the same cruel taunts.

Both mother and daughter were teased over being straight A students who took part in extra curricular activities. But they each the last laugh over their tormenters when went on to land beauty queen titles.

Charlotte, aged 20, suffered years of cruel taunts about her looks and straight-A grades by bullies who teased her for being intelligent. They also branded her "tree-trunk legs", a "big-boobed bimbo" and a "Jordan wannabe".

The abuse got so bad throughout her teenage years that police were called after cyber-bullies targeted her on Facebook and vandalised her parent's home in Hammerwich.

But she defiantly went on to achieve six A's and 5 As at GCSE, and two As and a B at A-level to get a place at the University of Birmingham.

Brains

Her glamorous mother Linda, 53, was also subjected to similar teenage anguish by jealous girls who teased her about her brains and beauty in the 70s.

Maths ace Charlotte followed in her mum's footsteps when was named Miss Undergraduate at university – some 38 years since Linda was named Miss Pelsall in her home town in Walsall in 1975.

Charlotte said: "I never let the bullies get me down and luckily I rose above it all. I've made some true friends for life since I joined uni – and I've finally been able to feel confident in myself."

"I've got my mum to thank for it, as we've both stayed pretty grounded and to a uncanny extent mirrored each other's lives."

"The bullies called me things like 'tree-trunk legs' and they called me Jordan because I used to wear short dresses and make-up, as well as the other obvious comparison which they drew."

"It got to the point where they egged my mum's car and ripped up the flower bed, we had to get the police in and they asked whether we wanted to push harassment charges. But I just wanted them to stop."

"It was mostly online – they wouldn't say anything to my face, they just pretended I



Linda Peach and her daughter Charlotte, who overcame the bullies at her school

was invisible and completely ignored me. It was a living hell."

Both mother and daughter's teenage years were tainted with anguish as they suffered cruelty at the hands of bullies.

Charlotte spent her secondary school life at Chasetown Specialist Sports College shunned for being too intelligent and teased for taking part in public speaking debates and playing piano.

Single mum-of-two Linda, a bank worker, also suffered the same fate at the hands of teenage girls during her school-life at Pelsall Comprehensive during the 70s. She added:



Linda Peach, Miss Pelsall 1975



Charlotte's public speaking award

"Charlotte didn't fit into the crowd of the popular girls who dated the school football team but also wasn't your traditional geeky pupil either."

"She was just in the middle and suffered for it."

"It's easy to say as a mother they were jealous of her but it is plain to see that's what it was."

"She got a whole deluge of abuse that just broke her heart. She actually believed she was fat and ugly."

"As a family it was a horrific time for us. We got to the point we didn't want to go on

holiday because we didn't want to leave the house. I knew how she felt to an extent, although nowhere near as badly because I was teased for winning the beauty contest."

"People said 'who do you think are?' and would be pretty cruel to me. But I only did it to make up the numbers."

"But without mobile phones and Facebook, I was quite fortunate in comparison as it always stopped when I got home."

Charlotte, who won a holiday to Ibiza as part of her beauty pageant victory, added: "At least we can both say now we've had the last laugh."

NEWS in brief

Business guru to aid small firms

A BUSINESS guru is due to give a talk to Walsall's struggling smaller companies about surviving the current economic climate.

Graham Cornfield, of Walsall firm In-tandem Management Solutions, has invited trainer Kevin Laye to address an audience at Forest Arts Centre, Hawbush Road, Leamore on Saturday April 20 from 9am to 5pm.

He is known for his unusual approach to business and uses his business psychology to help smaller firms grow.

Now That Is What I Call Good Business 2013 costs £100 plus VAT and can be booked by calling Mr Cornfield on 07814 125053 or emailing him on graham@i-tms.co.uk

Search on for former queens

ORGANISERS of Willenhall Carnival are looking for former queens of the fete to share their experiences of being given the crown.

The record of the former carnival queen's experiences will be included in this year's programme and will include information on what they are doing now and memories of their year of reign.

Anyone interested can contact organisers via email willemhallcarnival@live.co.uk or by calling 01902411611

Bowls club calls for new players

A BOWLS club in Walsall is appealing for new members. Gorway Bowls Club, which is attached to Walsall Cricket Club, in Gorway Road, currently has around 40 members.

Members hold inter-club competitions and friendly matches with other local clubs. The club also organises social events throughout the year. Call 01922 408704 for more information.

More clean-ups planned for town

MORE clean-ups are being planned for Walsall in efforts to help spruce up the borough.

The Walsall South Area Partnership has been helping to co-ordinate tidy-ups near the town centre.

Another is earmarked for April 27, starting from the Aisha Mosque, and another on October 5.

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NEWS FEATURE

IN MY VIEW

WITH
MARK
ANDREWS

COMMENTING on her latest wedding nuptials – the second in a month – glamour model-turned-“businesswoman” Katie Price was quoted as saying: “This will be my last.” For those of us who intently hang on to every one of her pearls of wisdom, these words are significant indeed.

At the same time, given that watershed announcement came at the end of a newspaper report, it begs the question of whether her sentence had been cut short. And what she really said was: “This will be my last for this month.”

THE story about the 17-year-old who devised a smartphone app while revising for his exams, and then sold it to internet giant Yahoo for £20m, is fascinating and disturbing in equal measure. Admittedly, part of my discomfort comes from the fact that I don't even know what a smartphone app is, let alone how to make £20m from one.

But if Nick D'Aloisio-Montilla is clever enough to persuade the great minds of Yahoo to part with such a sum of money, good luck to him. No doubt Young Nick celebrated his good fortune with scones all round and lashings of ginger beer, but will the money really bring him happiness?

For most youngsters on the brink of adulthood, life is a journey of discovery, an exciting time of new experiences, triumphs and failures. But having made so much money so young, it is hard to see how anything he achieves from now will seem like anything other than a disappointment.

And there is something not quite right about a 17-year-old who talks in terms of “3D rendering” and “product road maps”.

It is a bit like the arguments about whether 16 and 17-year-olds should be given the right to vote. When I was 17, there were lots of things I was desperate to do, mostly involving cars and alcohol, although never together you understand, but I can't honestly say voting figured highly.

Any adolescent whose burning desire is to turn up at their local school and put a cross next to the name of their local councillor is surely reason enough to keep the voting age at 18.

AND if further proof was needed that we are turning into a nation of geeks, I could not believe my eyes by what I saw during a football match at the weekend.

No, not Aston Villa throwing away a promising lead with sloppy defending. It was the reaction of one home supporter when his side took the lead on 31 minutes. While most of the Villa fans were jumping around cheering, the chap sitting next to us barely seemed to notice.

He sat resolutely in his seat tapping frantically away at his mobile phone. It just shows how becoming a slave to technology can sap out even the most basic of joys.



Humphrey Stanbury made a number of significant changes at the Grand Theatre



Some of the lions in the production of Robinson Crusoe back in 1974

Grand changes that made real difference

Theatre managing director who attracted record audiences dies at the age of 83.

HELEN BROWN reports

IN his time Humphrey Stanbury brought many changes to Wolverhampton's Grand Theatre and gained a reputation for bringing record audiences through the doors.

He took the helm in 1970 and his job as managing director saw him planning which shows and acts would take to the stage at the theatre. He was also a former general manager at the Birmingham Rep Theatre where he worked on and off for around 20 years. Tributes have been pouring in for Humphrey Stanbury, who has died at the age of 83.

Significant

Having attended theatre school as a youngster, Mr Stanbury, a father of two from Kinver, joined the Rep in 1949 and held a number of positions including electrician, stage manager and box office manager before working his way up to becoming the general manager.

When he joined the Grand, he made a number of significant changes to the programming and theatre building, which was at that time badly in need of modernisation.

By the end of his decade-long spell in charge, the theatre was attracting some of the biggest names in show business at that time including David Jason, Margot Fonteyn, John Inman, Derek Jacobi and Sid Little.

Among Mr Stanbury's most fondly remembered productions were the numerous pantomimes he staged including one very memorable performance of Robinson



Humphrey Stanbury, former managing director at the Grand Theatre

Crusoe in 1974 which featured four real lions on stage.

His son Thom, 45, who also works in the industry as an administrative director at London's Queen's Theatre, said his father was also proud of the fact he got the national ballet and opera companies to perform at the Grand.

He said: “Theatre really caught his imagination.

“As a youngster, I remember we

would travel miles to see a show. I think he found it very satisfying.”

Kate Evans, spokeswoman for the Grand, said: “His unique contribution to the theatre's development has earned him a very special place both in the venue's own history and in the memories of patrons and staff members fortunate enough to be part of the theatre community during this exciting and pivotal time.”



Jack and the Beanstalk at the Grand in 1975-76

After leaving the Grand, Mr Stanbury started a stage flying effects company based in his garage in Kinver that focused mostly on supplying and installing the equipment.

He ran that for 15 years before retiring.

Away from the world of theatre Mr Stanbury was a bee keeper in his spare time – a hobby maintained until a few years ago.

THROUGH THE YEARS

1983...

A YOUNG policeman on the beat got more than he bargained for after turning midwife when a mum-to-be went in to labour.

Elizabeth Fraser was expecting only one baby, but PC William Earle found himself delivering twins.

TALKS to end a strike at the Lucas Aerospace factory in Wolverhampton ground to a halt after workers rejected the terms offered by the company. The strike began on April 5 after 900 manual workers downed tools after a row over new technology.

POLICE officers smashed down a front door to rescue one man and his dog from a fire at Rubery, near Birmingham.

Sgt Peter Blake and Pc Paul Bott lead Keith Smith and his Labrador to safety after drying clothes fell on to a gas fire.

1993...

A £1.5 MILLION housing development for the elderly was opened in the site of Wolverhampton's wartime airport.

Cresswell Court offered 40 one-bedroom apartments with door entry security and guest accommodation.

EASTER came early for youngsters at a Wolverhampton hospital who received a 3ft egg from the Easter Bunny. Children at New Cross Hospital were given the 28lb egg by advertising agency Golley Slater Brooker.

A WOLVERHAMPTON mother snatched her sleeping son from his bed as hot water rained down on him from a flat above his bedroom. Mandy Robinson fought her way through the steam engulfing eight-year-old Daniel's room to grab him from his hot soaking bed.

2003...

WOLVERHAMPTON'S famous tramp Josef Stawinoga had his tent replaced by the council, but he was not happy. The Polish war veteran, known as 'Fred', had lived on the central reservation on St John's ring road for more than 35 years. When asked about his new abode, Fred said in Polish: “I am not interested in another tent.”

SCORES of youngsters abandoned their street hang outs in favour of a newly-opened ball court in Low Hill, Wolverhampton. The multi-ball court featured football, basketball and netball provision and was being used by up to 40 children every night.

WOLVERHAMPTON'S oldest women celebrated her 108th birthday – and she put it all down to getting plenty of rest.

Hilda Tudor enjoyed a celebration at Springfield Residential Home in Oaken Drive, Codsall and received a greeting from the Queen.

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LETTERS

Increase fuel allowance

THE winter fuel allowance has been eroded by energy price hikes. Four years ago the winter fuel allowance paid for three months gas and electricity for those able to claim it, pensioners etc.

The average dual fuel bill in 2009/10 was £800, so the allowance paid for the three worst cold months of the year.

Today the average dual fuel bill is £1,200, so the £200 winter fuel allowance only pays for two months gas and electric.

The continuous price hikes of gas and electric has reduced the buying

power of £200 by one third. Why hasn't our government restored the balance? The winter fuel allowance should be £300 today, to pay for the three coldest months of the year. After all this is the reason it was introduced.

Following the recent budget many people will lose a little, but pensioners are taking a big hit. Not just with escalating fuel bills but with the 'Bedroom Tax'.

This has been, and is still, a hard winter.

The pensioners' winter fuel allowance paid for December and January's bills but not February and

March, which have been very cold months this year.

Pensioners are going to die of cold, at this very minute, because the government has not 'index-linked' winter fuel allowances to energy price rises.

Last year more than 18,000 cold related deaths were recorded in this country, I fear this year it will be a great deal more.

Pensioners, who account for a large section of our society, should remember this at the next General Election.

A PARKER
Marston Street
Willenhall

Let courage of campaigner on hospital issue be your motivation

I WOULD be a rich man, if I had a pound for every time that I and/or my friends, neighbours and relatives, had said "but what can you do about it" with regard to issues under discussion, that we weren't happy about?

Then, to prove just how wrong you can be, along came Julie Bailey.

This courageous lady, motivated by the poor treatment and sad loss of her mother in Stafford Hospital, launched a campaign, from her modest cafe in Stafford, with a view to exposing, what was going on "behind the scenes" at this NHS establishment.

She was convinced that many things were wrong

and that "a screen of deceit" was in situ, in order to cover up what was wrong.

What Julie and her fellow campaigners uncovered beggars belief and has shown that this and probably other hospitals in this country are "not fit for purpose".

This has in turn has forced the government to take fast corrective action.

We all owe this lady, a massive vote of thanks for what she has achieved on behalf of all of us and I, for one, have been motivated by her efforts and achievements.

ALLAN KYTE
Gorsey Lane
Great Wyrley

LETTERS to the Editor

POST

Walsall Chronicle, Chronicle
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expressandstar.co.uk

Letters should be brief and MUST include name, address and telephone number of the writer. The Editor reserves the right to condense letters.

Not everyone can work

I am 61 years old and unemployed, being increasingly annoyed by the Lib-Dems/Tory attempts to divide and rule the disabled/non-workers and the workers.

Not everyone is able to be in work, even if they can find a job. Being a person with an incurable neurological condition - which will get worse - and cancer, I detest the attempt to vilify the disabled in the minds of the majority that are employed.

Many of the employed may have a relative whom is disabled or they may become disabled - which I hope not - but they will certainly become elderly.

By all accounts in the past year the banks have paid out £13 billion in bonuses and yet we have food banks opening to cope with rising hunger and poverty.

As welcome a relief as food banks are, isn't it an indictment of the government's policies that in the sixth richest country in the world we need food banks.

I'm sure the voters have sense to see through the crude ploy of the Tories and the cabinet of millionaires who say we are all in this together.

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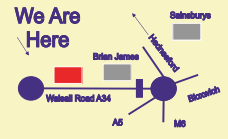
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NEWS

It's a good hair charity day for trainees



Peter Pyne training school manager Jennifer Thelwell, left, staff and students don wigs for charity

APPRENTICE hairdressers and barbers from across the Black Country donned tinsel wigs to raise money in aid of young cancer sufferers. The Wear-a-Wig initiative was organised through the Peter Pyne training school, Walsall, to collect cash for the Little Princess Trust.

The charity helps provide real-hair wigs to boys and girls across the UK and Ireland who have lost their own hair through cancer treatment. It costs around £350 for a natural hair wig and staff and apprentices from the training school have this week helped to collect cash. The budding hairdressers have been encouraged to wear fake wigs and

receive donations at their own salons. Then during training days at the Bridge Street base they also put on wigs with clients invited in to make a donation.

Around 50 apprentices, mainly women aged between 16 and 18, took part, along with a dozen trainers.

Tutor Hannah Andrews said: "We wanted them to get an idea of what it is like, and most were wearing tinsel wigs. The idea was to show how uncomfortable it was and what these children are dealing with until they get a natural wig.

Bosses have agreed to match whatever is raised last week and further fundraisers are being planned during the year.

Neighbour defies order by harassing pensioner

A DRUG addict who was jailed for harassing a Walsall pensioner into giving him his £9,000 life savings has admitted pestering his elderly neighbour again.

Richard Featherstone, aged 35, of Whitehall Road, Palfrey, admitted breaching a restraining order against Richard Williams, 81, after he asked him for more money and made phone calls to his house.

Walsall Magistrates' Court heard Featherstone was sent to prison last December after preying on Mr Williams and persuading him into giving him thousands of pounds of his life savings.

Featherstone went to Mr Williams's

house on March 24 and asked for £70 to pay for vets bills, Mrs Maggie Meakin, prosecuting, said. But in reality the father-of-one spent the money on crack cocaine.

A statement from Mr Williams read to the court said: "I have suffered for the past four years from harassment and nuisance. He has demanded money. I feel vulnerable. I give him the money to get rid of him."

Blatant

"It has been constant for four years and he has had more or less all my money," Mrs Meakin said Mr Williams suffered from ill health and heart problems.

She said Featherstone was causing him "significant psychological harm". "He has shown a blatant disregard to

the restraining order," she said. Mr Andrew Chowdhury, defending, said his client was suffering from the news his four-year-old son Jack had been diagnosed with meningitis.

He said Featherstone had never been violent to the victim or threatened him.

The court heard Featherstone had taken an overdose two days before going to the victim's house and that he had tried to end his own life.

"He has a very chaotic life," Mr Chowdhury said. "He has a crack cocaine habit and his partner is disabled after the epidural needles snapped while she was giving birth."

Magistrates ordered Featherstone to appear for sentence at Wolverhampton Crown Court on April 10. He was remanded in custody.

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NEWS

All-day ban on loading delivers shock to shops

NEW signs have gone up in Willenhall in a bid to stop the long-running problem of cars driving through the town centre.

But some shopkeepers claim they will prove bad for business as they do not allow time slots for deliveries.

Traders in Cross Street said they were shocked when the signs were put up in the street banning loading at any time.

Businesses including a butcher and a baker said it would make life tougher for them as they will not be able to get stock to their shops as easily.

They are calling on council chiefs to introduce a time for loading.

Matthew Butler, from the 100-year-old Butler's Butchers, said: "These signs have suddenly gone up saying no loading at any time."

"Me being a butcher's shop, I have to have deliveries of stock. In Market Place, the shops have time allocated for deliveries."

Heavy

"Cross Street seems to be the forgotten street of Willenhall yet again."

Mr Butler said the majority of the businesses in Cross Street relied on deliveries of stock.

Atefeh Dortaj, who runs Imperial Cake, said she now faces lugging heavy bags of flour and caster sugar from her car to the shop.

She said: "We also make wedding cakes in the shop - it's not the kind of thing you can carry through the town centre."

"I have contacted Walsall Council and asked them to give us some flexibility and introduce certain hours when we can load and unload."

The baker, who has run the business since 2011, said she had also found someone to rent the empty shop unit



Angry traders Mat Butler, front, of MP Butler Butchers, with from left, Raj Rani Klare, of Vinays, Stuart Russell, of Crazy Wicks, Nigel Bristow, of Tender Moments, Atefeh Dortaj, Saied Yengejeh and Abbie Peake, of Imperial cakes

next to hers. But on hearing about the new restrictions, there were now doubts over whether the lease would go ahead. It was planned for a cafe and pizza takeaway.

"These restrictions could end up being very bad for business," she said.

Calls have long been made for action to be taken in Willenhall town centre

amid fears cars driving through it are putting lives at risk, especially on market days.

The signs have been aimed at stopping drivers from passing through Cross Street, Market Place, Stafford Street and Wolverhampton Street.

No-one was available for comment at Walsall Council.

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NEWS

From T-shirt to toboggan weather



March 2012 – a pool in Bloxwich looking a bit dry
FROM glorious warm sunshine to biting cold – what a difference a year makes.

In March 2012, revellers were basking in the sun across Walsall, sipping cool drinks in beer gardens and mopping their brows in the early spring heat. Twelve months on, the situation has dramatically changed, as these pictures show.

This time last year, this pool in Bloxwich, off the A34



March 2013 – the same pool now full of water

Stafford Road, was drying up in temperatures in the mid-20s C. Fast-forward a year and the same pool is full to its brim from melted snow.

Last year's sunbathers are wrapped up indoors as snow blankets the area, transforming the scene into one resembling a Christmas card. Forecasters have warned Britain's 'big freeze' will last until at least the middle of April.

Two more pub revamp schemes are submitted

A FORMER watering hole at the heart of Willenhall town centre and an empty pub in Walsall have become the latest in a string across the borough that are poised to be redeveloped.

The Barrel & Shive pub in Market Place, Willenhall, which shut in December, is earmarked to be converted into a flat and shop, creating two jobs.

The Hatherton Arms, at the corner of Butts Road and Lichfield Street, Walsall, could be transformed into four, two-bedroom apartments under proposals lodged with Walsall Council.

The upper floors of the old Willenhall pub have recently been converted to apartments. The shop would open on the ground floor, with a new flat at the rear.

The four apartments are earmarked for the former Hatherton Arms.

Leases

A report, submitted with the planning application, reads: "Our proposals aim to bring back to life this vacant building preserving its architectural and economic merits within the conservation area."

St Matthews Councillor Mohammed Arif said it would be good to see the building being given a new lease of life before it falls victim to vandalism. He

added: "The Hatherton Arms was quite an established meeting place for locals and the local neighbourhood watch group."

"It will be good to see it being brought back into use before it gets vandalised and set on fire, like Mellish Road Methodist Church which was opposite it."

Plans have already been lodged to turn the Old Kings Arms, Palfrey, into stores. It followed proposals to convert the derelict Brown Jug and The British Oak, Willenhall, into a convenience store and supermarket.

A scheme was recently lodged to transform the town's oldest pub, The Bell Inn, Market Place, in a £300,000 regeneration project.

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NEWS

Gypsy jazz style for musical cousins



Jazz guitarists Nick Mellor, left, and Paul Vernon Chester will be performing *Note for Note* at the Lichfield Garrick COUSINS who have spent the past 50 years rocking together are to take the stage once more in Staffordshire. Paul Vernon Chester and Nick Mellor, both of Walsall, first picked up guitars as schoolboys. They spent the next five decades gigging and performing their ultimate love, Gypsy Jazz, the style of music inspired by legendary guitarist Django Reinhardt. The dynamic duo will next perform in the studio at the

Lichfield Garrick Theatre on May 11 at 7.30pm. Mr Chester is a former teacher who grew up in Bloxwich, while his cousin worked in electrics and grew up in Blakenall Heath.

"We have been going for a long time so our show is finely tuned," said Mr Chester.

The acoustic duo have performed all over the UK and bring their *Note for Note* show to Lichfield.

Plan to tear down and replace a dilapidated parade of shops

A PARADE of dilapidated shops in Walsall town centre will be torn down to make way for a new complex to encourage businesses to take up a unit, under new plans.

The two-storey building in Broadway currently consists of three shops on the ground floor and two apartments on the first floor.

The 1930s property would be demolished and three retail units and five apartments would be built in its place under a scheme that could create jobs.

It would be the latest facelift for the

area after a new Co-op store opened on the corner of Hawes Road and the nearby post office moved in.

A report lodged with the planning application to Walsall Council says the building is in need of "much maintenance" and a decision has been made to rebuild it to modern standards and introduce more apartments.

Attractive

There has been a variety of tenants in the shops over the years, which have most recently been used as a Chinese takeaway, sandwich shop and florist.

No businesses have yet been lined up to take over the proposed units but it is thought that modernising the building

will make it more attractive to potential tenants.

Gary Dearden, the agent acting on behalf of the applicant, said: "The current property is quite dilapidated. The apartments are tired and need renovating."

"There has been a high turnover in the shops. Having a more modern facility is more saleable."

There would be one three-bedroom apartment, three two-bedroom apartments and a single one-bedroom flat. Car parking would also be provided.

The planning application is due to be decided by Walsall Council in the coming months.



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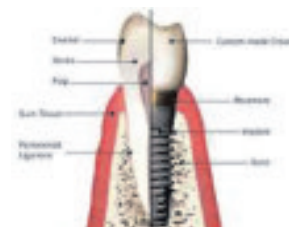
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Price includes: coach, boat trip plus lunch as shown.

**Coach departs: Thursday 23rd May
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Day 3: Breakfast, then a day of contrasts as we visit a vibrant, trendy town Cavan and a more typically Irish town, Kells. Later we pass through the village of Slane and make a final stop at the Battle of the Boyne visitor centre in Donore.

Day 4: Breakfast, then today your driver will offer you an optional trip out or you may want to stay in and relax today.

Day 5: An early start today as we leave the hotel around 6:00 and head back to Dublin to catch the 8:20 ferry back to Holyhead. We have breakfast on the ferry this morning instead of the hotel.

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Coach departs: Monday 29th April **£199**

Lincoln Mini Break **£79**

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Look what's included...

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Day 2: After breakfast, we head for the charming market town of Chesterfield in the Peak District which is on our route home. Chesterfield's ancient and colourful market is on today so have a browse while you're here. Don't miss the town's famous crooked spire of the Church of St. Mary and the Museum on St. Mary's Gate very close to the Church is well worth a visit. After a good time in Chesterfield we leave for home.

We stay at the **Holiday Inn Lincoln** set on trendy Brayford waterfront, a short distance from Lincoln's historic centre, with modern guest rooms with a range of interesting views.

Price includes: hotel, dinner, breakfast & all coach travel. **Single Supp £10**

Coach departs: Sunday 14th July **£79**

Day 1: Join our coach on Saturday morning as we travel to London. Time for lunch etc before our pre-booked guided tour of the Houses of Parliament at 4pm. The fascinating insight lasts about 1½ hours. The coach will be waiting for you after the tour to take you to the hotel at Heathrow.

Day 2: After breakfast we leave the hotel for our pre-booked visit to Kensington Palace in the heart of London. Explore the new gardens, shop, café and terrace as well as four redesigned visitor routes revealing the Queen Victoria exhibition. Then time at Covent Garden before we leave for home.

Price includes: coach, hotel, breakfast & admission to Houses of Parliament & Kensington Palace. **SS £20**

Coach departs: Saturday 22nd June **£99**

CLUB NEWS

Songs to mark WI's 92nd year

COVEN WI

COVEN WI is 92 years and still going strong.

Sumptuous food, stirring music, excellent singing and comradeship all contributed to a wonderful March evening as the milestone was celebrated.

It was also an opportunity to reflect on the past year. Jerusalem was sung, the president concluded all the formal business and a Canadian grace was read, before the Brewood Singers - themselves marking their 40th year - were warmly welcomed to provide the entertainment.

They were then invited to join in the buffet meal provided by members.

The Brewood Singers were accompanied by a pianist on a stage piano and they delighted members with a variety of renditions, with music and songs to please every taste.

The group holds free spring workshops at Perton, Brewood and Wombourne libraries culminating in a concert at Brewood Parish Church on April 13.

The competition, a decorated egg, was judged and a raffle followed.

Some members will be attending a group meeting on April 17 at Bilbrook with afternoon tea and a flower arranging demonstration. On April 20 members will visit Moseley Old Hall.

The next meeting is the AGM on April 9 at Coven Memorial Hall at 7.30pm.

Team overcomes pier pressure to win quiz



Chairman Val Walker presents a 40 year certificate to trip organiser Pat Heeley

EVEN though inclement weather had been forecast, the March 21 meeting was well attended.

A round of applause greeted the news that guild's team had won the Federation quiz after a tie-breaker question involving the length of Southend Pier.

After the official opening of the AGM and the adoption of Standing Orders matters commenced with the secretary Margaret Worrall's report outlining events over the preceding 12 months. Chairman Val Walker

PELSALL E TG

thanked the committee for its continuing hard work and all were re-elected.

The meeting ended with the presentation of the Monthly Competition Cup to Ann Sale, for the ninth consecutive year.

The Chairman also presented National Certificates and badges commemorating 40 years continuous membership to Hilda Craddock and Pat Heeley.

Clark's shoes to be filled

SEDGLEY E TWG

AT the AGM, outgoing chairman Mary Clark, was presented with a bouquet in recognition of her services to the guild.

Mary has been a very active member for many years and has served as chairman on three occasions

over a total of seven years.

It was a very successful AGM and a full committee of 10 members was raised.

As there was no speaker,

the evening was left free for a social chat, cup of tea and a cake. The club is now looking forward to this year's programme.

Meetings are on the third Monday in the month at Sedgley Community Centre at 7.15pm.

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NEWS

Overall it's a display to recall factory memories



Collections officer Catherine Lister with the overalls and pinnies



Catherine Lister takes a peak at some of the colourful overalls

FACTORY fashions from days gone by have been put on show at a Walsall Museum.

Clothes worn by women as they worked in Walsall's many factories and workshops are now on display at the town's museum.

Overalls, pinafores and aprons worn by women from down the decades are the focus of the latest exhibition, called Factory Girls. Dress-like overalls of the 1920s are on show, alongside the classic cross-over pinnies styles of the 1930s and 1940s. Visitors will also see the nylon jacket styles which were popular in the 1960s and 1970s.

Catherine Lister, from the museum, said: "It is quite rare that clothes are in such good condition as this, especially because it's workwear. It's nice to see them on show and it may bring back memories for some visitors."

"People will identify with these clothes having worked in factories and having to wear protective clothing."

Selling

She added despite the fact it was workwear, the designs were often colourful and bright. Women often took great pride in their overalls, with bright colours and floral prints all the rage.

Many of the clothes come from the Hodson collection, a haul of garments recovered from an old shop in New Road, Willenhall.

Edith and Flora Hodson opened a shop in the front room of their family home selling their wares between the 1920s and 1960s.

Their unsold stock now acts as an important testament to the everyday fashions of the people of the Black Country.

Later items of factory clothing have come from the museum's vast collection.

Some items, including a coat style overall from the Second World War worn in a factory which made helmets, have been donated to the museum. Factory Girls is on show until June 12 and can be seen on the first floor of the Lichfield Street gallery.

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NEWS

Action call on schools shut during snow

COUNCIL officers in Walsall are being urged to work with headteachers to reduce the number of school closures during snowy conditions.

The call has come from Willenhall North councillor Ian Shires. Dozens of schools closed across the borough following the recent heavy snowfall, due to slippery conditions making access

difficult. He said he intended to raise the issue with cabinet members on the council. He also suggested shopkeepers should be consulted to ensure businesses can remain open and continue trading efficiently in the snow.

"Perhaps we can work with schools through their governing bodies, and shopkeepers, to ask them ways in

which we can help them to help themselves," he said. "It's about getting the community spirit going and making things more efficient. If we can work together, we will all benefit."

Walsall Council leader Mike Bird said schools must pay for gritting and few had been prepared to. He added: "I think there's little more we can do."

Jonah, 5, all smiles as meeting One Direction



One Direction superfan, Jonah Barclay, from Bloxwich, meets his pop idols at the LG Arena

A YOUNG boy from Bloxwich, who is battling cancer, came face to face with his boyband idols One Direction.

Jonah Barclay, aged five, was given the chance to meet the chart-topping five, which includes Wolverhampton's Liam Payne.

Not only did the youngster get the chance to see the band perform their recent gig at Birmingham's LG Arena, he was one of a handful of people who got to sit in the front row and witness the sound checks beforehand.

Jonah was diagnosed with acute lymphoblastic leukemia in April 2010

and the visit was organised by charity Rays of Sunshine.

After listening to One Direction carry out their sound-checks and sing two of their hits, St Michael's Primary School pupil Jonah had his photograph taken with the band.

Great

He even stood next to his favourite, Zayn Malik.

Jonah was joined at the LG Arena by his father Paul and mother Emma, who said: "Jonah had a really great time and really enjoyed the concert. He loved it and he is full of smiles whenever he speaks about it." Jonah, who

loves dancing around to One Direction songs and playing football, is an avid fan of the boy band.

"Whenever they are on the television, Jonah likes us to tape it so he can watch it again," said Mrs Barclay, who is also mother to 16-month-old Nate.

"Zayn is his favourite. The boys chatted to the small crowd who were watching them and then came down for photographs. They made Jonah feel very at ease."

"He had a wonderful time." Mrs Barclay said Jonah was due to complete his treatment in November this year.

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NEWS

Dogs kept in appalling state

A COUPLE have appeared in court for keeping their two dogs in "appalling" conditions - one of which was found in an emaciated state at their Walsall home.

Dean Ball, aged 24, and Gemma Elson, 23, of Church Street, Bloxwich, appeared at Walsall Magistrates Court for neglecting their two female Staffordshire bull terriers.

Police came across the animals when they were called to the house last October in response to concerns.

A black and white dog was found emaciated and it was clear the welfare

of a brindle coloured dog had been neglected, the court heard last week. Mrs Gaynor Sutton, prosecuting on behalf of the RSPCA, said: "The conditions in which they were found were appalling."

Police seized the dogs and handed them over to the RSPCA, and they were then taken to a vet.

Waiting

Mrs Sutton said the weight of the black and white dog had dropped to 8.5kg, but within six weeks the animal had gained 40 per cent of her body weight back by being fed properly.

Both dogs were also dewormed and are now waiting to be rehomed. Ball

and Elson both spoke only to confirm their names, addresses and dates of birth. Each admitted a charge of causing unnecessary suffering to the black and white dog by failing to act to address the animal's weight loss.

The charges dated back to between September 26 and October 10 last year.

They each also pleaded guilty to two charges of failing to ensure the welfare of both dogs between September 12 and October 10.

The case was adjourned and the couple are due to be brought back to Walsall Magistrates Court on May 7 to be sentenced.

They were both released on unconditional bail.

Go-ahead for canopy work

IMPROVEMENT work is to be carried out at a Walsall infants school after receiving the go-ahead from council planners.

The scheme includes an external canopy outside the nursery classroom and store room extension at Blue Coat Junior School, Hanch Place.

It has been approved by Walsall Council under delegated powers. Head of planning David Elsworth said the design and materials would not have an adverse impact on the adjoining listed building or Church Hill Conservation Area.

Daughters inspire children's books



Pelsall author John Dony with his published books with his daughters Emily, aged eight, and Leah, aged five

A FATHER from Walsall who was inspired to write books by his young daughters has finally had two published - and has named them after his children. John Dony said it was "amazing" to see two of his own creations, Emily and the Spider and Leah's Lions, hit the shelves.

The 45-year-old used to read the stories to his youngest daughters, Emily, aged eight, and Leah, five. He said: "I tried to get my books published in England. I wrote to everyone I could. Then out of the blue I got an email from a publisher in America. I sent my books over to them and they quite liked them."

Father-of-five Mr Dony, who works at Walsall Manor Hospital in the estates department, started writing children's stories around 10 years ago. "I used to tell these stories to my children," he added.

Adventure

"They were just bed time tales but seemed to get longer and longer and that's when I started writing them down. I thought most stories for girls were about fairies and princesses. When I was younger I loved adventure stories so that's what they are."

"My daughters keep telling everyone that they are famous. We'll be in the queue at Tesco and they'll be telling the person at the check-out."

Mr Dony said his daughters had also taken the books into school to show them to teachers and classmates. The books have gone on sale in Waterstones and WH Smith.

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OUT AND ABOUT

Thomas and lots of white-knuckle thrills

DRAYTON Manor Theme Park, near Tamworth, has opened its doors for the new season.

The park, set in 280 acres of countryside, is home to Europe's only Thomas Land, which will delight young fans of Thomas and Friends.

Based on the ever-popular TV series, Thomas Land features many rides and attractions including Cranky's Drop Tower and the Troublesome Trucks Coaster and Blue Mountain Engines.

Drayton Manor also boasts a selection of white-knuckle thrill rides, including the adrenaline-inducing drop-tower Apocalypse, stand-up coaster Shockwave, the splash-tastic log flume Stormforce 10 and stomach-churning gyro-swing Maelstrom. There's also a sensational 4D cinema.

Monkeys

There is a 15-acre zoo within the theme park's grounds, which houses a Sumatran tiger, monkeys and primates, a meerkat mob, and a pair of highly-endangered black leopards, as well as birds of prey and reptiles.

For visitors looking to turn a day trip into an overnight stay, there's also the luxurious four-star Drayton Manor Hotel. It has 150 bedrooms, including 15 Thomas & Friends themed family rooms, each with a unique hand-painted scene on the wall and ceiling, themed bunk beds, and train track patterned carpets in the corridors leading to each room.

For further information about Drayton Manor Theme Park or to pre-book discounted entry tickets visit www.draytonmanor.co.uk or call 0844 472 1960.



Rosie, Thomas, the Fat Controller and friends at Thomas Land, the special attraction for younger children within Drayton Manor Theme Park

Full steam ahead on the SVR

FULLY up and running for the new season, Severn Valley Railway has packed its timetable full of events, special guests, activities and exciting opportunities for visitors this spring.

Throughout Easter the attraction's many resident steam locomotives will be fired-up and ready to take visitors back in time on a journey through stunning scenery along the railway's 16-mile span from Kidderminster to Bridgnorth, stopping off at the six unique stations en-route.

For hands-on fun, The Engine House at Highley has re-opened with a range of interactive exhibits, including up to eight impressive steam locomotives, a majestic royal carriage and railway-themed outdoor play area.

Birmingham-based theatre company Language Alive! will bring some Easter entertainment with interactive children's performance All Aboard! at 10.45am at Kidderminster station on April 9 and 10, transporting their audience back to winter 1852.

Peppa Pig & George will be special guests at the first of two Family Fun Weekends, on April 27-28 April, followed by Octonauts stars Captain Barnacles and Kwazii on May 11 and 12. The two action-packed events also include a kids' disco, inflatable play area, surf simulator, art & craft workshops and family entertainment.

For bookings and more information, contact 01299 403816 or visit the www.svr.co.uk website.

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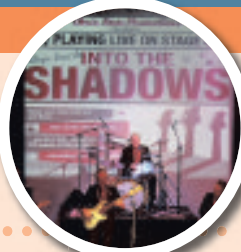
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NEWS

Firm fined after toilet waste kills 300 fish

A WALSALL-BASED portable toilet firm has been handed a court bill of more than £25,000 after polluted waste was dumped in a river, killing more than 300 fish.

Orchid Investments Ltd in Aldridge dumped the chemical toilet waste into a tributary of the River Avon at Long Marston Airfield, near Stratford-upon-Avon, without having an environmental permit, Leamington Magistrates Court heard.

Ms Sheila Abrahams, prosecuting on behalf of the Environment Agency, told the court that the Anglian Road firm had supplied sanitation for the Bulldog Bash biker festival in August 2011.

Pollution

Normally, sealed plastic holding tanks would be used to contain the effluent during the event, prior to the removal off site to a sewage treatment works. But, on this occasion, the firm had wrongly assumed the holding vessel was lined and the effluent was discharged directly into the tributary.

It killed fish, including roach, perch and dace. The stretch of water affected extended to 2.3 miles.

The firm admitted causing a discharge of chemical toilet effluent into a tributary of the Gran Brook without an environmental permit. Orchid Investments Ltd was

by Lisa O'Brien

fined £16,000, ordered to pay £9,367 costs and a £15 victim surcharge.

Christian Heritage, managing director, said: "We have accepted responsibility for this incident from the outset but wish to make it clear that the discharge occurred due to human error and was in no way an intentional occurrence."

"We co-operated fully to assist in the clean-up operation and paid the Environment Agency for their costs. We have since taken preventative steps to ensure any future problems cannot occur in a similar fashion. The whole incident has been a costly and unwelcome blemish on an otherwise unmarked record of nearly two decades of successful waste management."

Police appeal to trace men after violence at town centre protest



Most wanted - Police are appealing for help to trace these 10 men in relation to violence which flared during an English Defence League protest in Walsall town centre

POLICE want to speak to these 10 men after violence erupted on the streets of Walsall during a protest by the English Defence League.

Officers have spent hours trawling through CCTV footage of the disorder, which broke out in the town centre on September 29 last year.

It comes after police carried out early morning raids last week, arresting eight people on suspicion of public order offences.

Homes in Walsall, Brownhills, West Bromwich, Tipton and Hateley Heath were all targeted.

Six men have been charged with violent disorder and two have been bailed pending further inquiries.

Detective Inspector Pete Dunn said: "The majority of the people attending these demonstrations were law abiding, however, small numbers of people decided to get embroiled in disorder and ultimately there were a few ugly scenes."

He said 30 people were arrested on the day and some had been convicted of public order offences.

"The message to people intent on bringing violence to the streets of the West Midlands when attending such events is clear - we will not tolerate disorder," he added.

"The force takes a hard line against anyone who comes to the West Midlands and brings violence to our streets,

whether it be in the name of an organisation or just for devilment. If you commit such crimes we will track you down and ultimately you will be brought before the courts."

Some police officers and protestors suffered minor injuries during the protest by the EDL and a counter demonstration group. Up to 1,000 people are said to have descended on the town.

Chief Superintendent Dave Sturman said a great deal of mediation went on with the groups involved before the event. "We recognise that the people of Walsall were both concerned and inconvenienced on the day and we hope that residents are reassured by our continuing efforts to bring those involved in disorder in the town to justice," he added.

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- Free time in Manchester
- Return coach travel from Dudley, Walsall & Wolverhampton

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NEWS

Rainbow award for young charity helper



Over the Rainbow winner Benedicta Agbonze with Matthew Reed, chief executive of The Children's Society

A YOUNG charity worker from Walsall is celebrating winning an award that recognises young people who have done outstanding work for The Children's Society.

Songwriter Benedicta Agbonze, aged 19, was nominated for the award for her commitment to the West Midlands Refugee programme in Birmingham.

The young helper has been involved with the group that transform the lives of disadvantaged children, by helping out at a residential weekend where she befriended asylum seekers and young refugees by writing two songs entitled 'Getting Better' and 'Being B'.

Judges at the Over the Rainbow Awards held in Warwickshire commended her for being an inspiration to other young people through her strength and bravery.

Children's Society chief executive Matthew Reed said: "Benedicta is an outstanding ambassador for the charity and should be extremely proud of what she has achieved."

"Her tireless work is making a real difference to the lives of other children and young people. It was an honour to present Benedicta with her much-deserved award."

Police step up patrols after spate of car crime

FOURTEEN cars have been broken into on streets in Willenhall, as police step up patrols following a spate of crimes. Four other cars have been stolen since February 1, police said.

by Catherine Dalton

There has been a rise in car-related crimes in the Willenhall south ward, with many being targeted late in the evening and overnight.

Side streets off main roads such as Pinson Road and New Road are among those targeted, while thefts have also been reported in Owen Road and St Anne's Road.

A spokesman for West Midlands Police said police had stepped up patrols.

"Over recent weeks there has been an increase in vehicle offences in the Willenhall policing area," he said.

"The majority of these offences are theft from motor vehicles and attempted theft which are occurring during late evening and overnight. High visibility mobile and foot patrols are being conducted to combat this issue."

Officers added some of the

more recent thefts had involved number plates and wheel trims. Other streets affected include Villiers Street, Clarkes Lane, Harper Street and Noose Lane.

Councillor Carl Creaney, representative for Willenhall South, warned residents to be on their guard.

Another priority for police is tackling business crime after a number of firms were targeted for metal.

Firms in the town have set up a business watch scheme with private security firms drafted in, alongside CCTV and alarm systems.

Additional police patrols are also being carried out around business parks and companies are being offered security advice.

Anyone with information on vehicle crime should call police on 101.

Children services probe

A WATCHDOG group to inspect children's services in Walsall has been set up following a damning Ofsted report into the way the local authority protects and safeguards vulnerable children in its care. The group, made up of councillors, will visit parts of the children's services department to find out how the system works and will report will then be submitted to a meeting of the Children's and Young People's scrutiny panel later this spring.

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FOCUS ON WILLENHALL

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Fresh hope for eyesore as site sold at auction

A DILAPIDATED former doctor's surgery in Willenhall has been sold at auction.

It is hoped the rundown building in Bloxwich Road South will now be cleaned up. Known as Ednam House, it went under the hammer with a guide price of £70,000 to £80,000.

Vandals

It has sparked hopes it will finally put an end to complaints over the state of the eyesore site. It has been empty since 2004 and became a target for vandals.

Councillor Carl Creaney, representative for Willenhall South, said: "I'm glad this has been sold at last."

"We just want to see something done there to clean it up and put an end to the long-running complaints about it."

Time to get fit for spring

PEOPLE from Willenhall will have the opportunity to burn off some of the Easter eggs consumed over the weekend with a fitness class.

The six-week inch-loss camp at Willenhall Chart Centre in Gomer Street is run by a professional fitness team that aim to help people lose weight and tone up muscle through high intensity exercise. For more information contact Sam on 01922 368 199

Inspiring Jayne is one of UK's young achievers

AN INSPIRING woman from Willenhall who overcame bullying and panic attacks has been honoured at a ceremony in London.

Jayne Fletcher, aged 29, was one of just three young people from across the UK to be shortlisted for the Samsung Young Achiever award, which recognises people who overcome barriers to succeed.

She attended a star-studded awards ceremony in London, where she was congratulated by Prince Charles.

Jayne said: "I'm so excited to have been named runner up for the Samsung young achiever of the year award."

"The Prince's Trust has helped me grow in confidence and self-belief and given me so many opportunities. Without them I don't know where I'd be."

Dame Helen Mirren, Homeland star Damien Lewis and actor Idris Elba were among the guests at the event at London's Leicester Square.

Jayne, who was born deaf, had always wanted to be a pop star but due to bullying, she led a reclusive life. She only ventured out to for her anti-depressant prescription and to visit her local job-centre.

But her life changed when she found out about The Prince's Trust Enterprise programme and signed up.

by Catherine Dalton

It aims to help young people who are looking to explore their options in self-employment.

Now her life has been turned around and Jayne has been involved in television and radio work for the BBC, featured in magazines, created music videos and completed a UK Pride tour.

She has also got involved with music projects, performing live to songs in sign language and creating a signed music video to raise money for charities.

Teaching

She is now teaching British sign language level one and two three times a week.

Robert King, vice president of consumer electronics for Samsung Electronics UK and Ireland, said: "I would like to offer Jayne my congratulations for being named runner-up for this prestigious award."

Television presenters Ant and Dec hosted The Prince's Trust and Samsung Celebrate Success Awards.



Willenhall's Got Talent winner Sophie Rose shows off her shield along with, third-placed Shannon Harvey, left, and runner-up Abbie Bullock

Girls show that they have talent

THREE teenagers from Willenhall have picked up prizes for coming up trumps in the town's second talent competition.

Judges at Willenhall's Got Talent had a hard time deciding on the final winners after they saw every kind of talent displayed at the event, supported by Willenhall Rotary Club.

Sophie Rose, aged 14, claimed first place, closely followed by Abbie Bullock, 16, in second place and Shannon Harvey, also 16, third.

Organiser Willenhall South Councillor Diane Coughlan said: "It was really brilliant. The talent on display from these kids was phenomenal. They were all very confident and professional."

First prize included a recording session at A Flat Studios and a shield.

The busy night also raised £400 for a charity which is being set up to support gifted and talented children from Willenhall.

Teenager in top charity marathon challenge

A WILLENHALL runner raising money for charity has discovered he may be one of the youngest participants at this year's London Marathon.

Dan Morton, who has just turned 18, will be covering the 26 miles on behalf of Mencap.

The Pool Hayes School student said he had chosen the charity after being told about a close family friend with severe autism.

"To take this up at 18 is difficult but it's not something I regret training for while also doing your A Levels," Dan said.

"I can't wait for the final run, every run I have ever done has been working up to this."

His mother, Alison Lee said: "It's been a bit of a shock he was just your average 17-year-old couch potato. I am incredibly proud of him."

Dan has already raised more than £1,200 towards his £1,600 total. To donate visit www.justgiving.com/DanielMorton95

Books for bowls

MEMBERS of Willenhall Trinity Bowls Club hope shoppers will be bowled over by bargains at their second-hand book sale on Saturday. It will take place at the club based in Charles Street, Willenhall between 10am and 1pm with money going towards the purchase of covered accommodation for visiting teams.

Jigsaws, DVDs and CDs will be also be for sale with prices starting from 25p.

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OUT AND ABOUT

Words still don't come easy for top comic Dave

by Andrew Turton

IT'S been a roller-coaster ride for a funnyman who rode the crest of a wave as a star and writer of the hit television comedy Phoenix Nights.

But life on the road making audiences up and down the country roll in the aisles with laughter is still the bread and butter for Dave Spikey.

Spikey's Words Don't Come Easy tour is in its fourth incarnation, but fresh material has been penned by the 61-year-old Lancashire stand-up ahead of shows in Dudley and Cannock.

Differences

"I started working out my own dates and venues as I was sick of doing Torquay one night and Inverness the next and going to the same places all the time," he said.

"And when I started working on it myself I realised there was so many other venues and theatres I'd never been to which is why I'm really looking forward to coming to Dudley and to Cannock.

"Geographically you find there are differences between the audiences which is great for me and something I really enjoy.

"I've done gigs in Wolverhampton at the Wulfrun Hall and the Glee Club in Birmingham as well which is one of my favourites so I like it around here.

"I'll do a few weeks, then take some time off to recharge the batteries and it also helps me to write new material."

Spikey worked for many years as a biomedical scientist in the haematology laboratory at Bolton General Hos-



Comedian Dave Spikey's tour will be coming to the region during April

pital. But it was his portrayal of down-on-his-luck club compere Jerry St Clair at the Bolton club Phoenix Nights set his star rising leading to national fame.

Numerous panel show appearances including Eight out of Ten Cats followed as well as well-received stand up tours. He says his tour name was

inspired by the quirky English language often tied up in clichés, tongue-twisters and well-worn phrases.

Spikey is playing at Dudley Concert Hall on April 13 and Cannock's Prince of Wales Theatre on April 19.

Visit www.davespikey.co.uk for ticket details.

So hoppy to see you at the zoo

GIANT English rabbit Alvin is set for a hoppy Easter at Dudley Zoo as the two-year-old male settles into his new home at the Farm Barn.

The bonny bunny will be joining the Castle Hill attraction's eggs-travaganza as youngsters take part in an Easter Trail, from March 29 to April 14, with a free chocolate surprise for the first 500 entries on Easter Sunday.

There's also a chance to enter a prize draw to win a year-long adoption package for Alvin – who weighs in at a whopping 15lbs (6.9kilos) – plus zoo tickets.

Penguins

For crafty young visitors there are Easter activities in the Farm Barn and Discovery Centre including a colouring competition.

Also on the 40-acre site there's a chance to get close to tigers, Tschuna and Daseep, via a peek through our glass viewing panel and say hello to baby chicks in Penguin Bay, which allows visitors to get close to the 70-strong group of rare Humboldt penguins.

There are also baby chicks down on the farm, plus baby lemurs and a three-month-old Bennetts wallaby. See www.dudleyzoo.org.uk for details.



Big bunny – senior keeper Lesley Lewis is pictured with the giant English rabbit Alvin at Dudley Zoo

Go on a safari – in Worcestershire

WEST Midland Safari and Leisure Park is open for the new season and, as well as four miles of self-drive safari, its ever-popular selection of rides includes the Hurling Hippos.

The latest family ride to be introduced at the safari park, near Bewdley, in August last year, is the £400,000 Hurling Hippos which was the first ride to be specifically designed by park staff and is the only one of its kind.

Hurling Hippos brought the total number of rides at the park up to 28. Leisure area manager Marcus Hyde-

Fynn, said, "The Jumbo Parade is just one of our all-time classic family favourites. It can seat up to 24 passengers in twelve elephant themed carriages that can take to the air at the touch of a button."

Meerkat

The standard admission charge to the safari park is £16.99 for adults and £12.99 for children and includes a free return ticket, free car parking, self-drive safari, Penguin Cove, Creepy Crawlies, Mark O'Shea's Reptile

World, Seaquarium, friendly Animal/Reptile Encounters, Hippo Lakes, Safari Express Train and the African Village, which includes Meerkat Mayhem and Walking with Lemurs. Amusement rides are charged extra in all cases.

West Midland Safari and Leisure Park will be open daily until Friday, November 8.

Further information is available from the park's official website www.wmsp.co.uk or by telephone 01299 402114.

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Pegs and mops are ready for museum's spring clean

THE Black Country Living Museum in Dudley is inviting visitors to take part in a Spring Clean.

Visitors can come and learn all about different types of traditional methods from cleaning windows with newspaper and vinegar to washing clothes in a dolly tub. There will also be washing demonstrations throughout the day where visitors can have ago themselves. So bring your dirty socks and get stuck in!

Dolls

At programmed times in the day there will be the Spring Cleaning themed street games, where visitors can gather in the main village to get the chance to race against each other or compete in Peg It, The Sock Throw and the Mop Head Marathon. And taking place in the rear of the school at the Tipton Road museum there will be the opportunity for the visitors to take part in 'Hands On Heritage' activities, making peg dolls and peg planes. This will be running

from 11am till 3pm everyday until April 14.

For more information on activities visit www.bclm.co/whatson and book a day visit online to save 10 per cent at www.bclm.com/bookings.

Easter Egg dancing will be part of the family fun at Blists Hill Victorian town, near Ironbridge, when the Shropshire attraction celebrates Easter from March 29 to April 1.

The unusual pastime of egg dancing involves blindfolded townsfolk trying to dance across the street without stepping on any eggs, which have been placed on their route.

Meanwhile, family ceramic workshops will be held at Coalport China Museum, in Ironbridge Gorge, to make a house from clay or glazed mug or plate. Sessions are held during the Easter holidays. There is a fee per item made.

For further information on Shropshire's industrial heritage attractions see www.ironbridge.org.uk or call 01952 433 424.



The policeman at the Black Country Living Museum in Dudley is known for his sweet tooth

Flights of fancy at the RAF Museum display

THIS Easter holiday, children can take part in a hunt for giant Easter Eggs with an RAF roundel on them, hidden amongst the aircraft on display at RAF Museum Cosford.

Each Egg hunter will need to find where all of the giant eggs are hidden and make a note of the code letters using their trail sheet. After finding all of the eggs, children can decipher the secret word in order to claim their prize.

Pick up the trail from the admissions desk on arrival at the museum, near Albrighton. It is open daily 10am to 6pm and admission is free. There is a charge for parking.

RAF Museum Cosford can be enjoyed whatever the weather. There are lots of

impressive exhibits and plenty of hands-on fun, whether investigating air flow with 'The Blower' or guiding a Hercules. The museum's 4D Experience combines computer animation with the added dimension of special environmental effects. See www.rafmuseum.org for more information.

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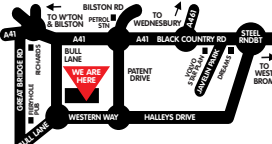


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MEMORY LANE

Thomas Graham



The plaque at the E&S



Thomas Graham

Thomas Graham, whose plaque is outside the Express & Star's head office in Queen Street, Wolverhampton, was born in Dunfermline in 1841. After moving to Wolverhampton he ran a meat curing business, and became a prominent councillor and magistrate before forming the newspaper, which is still owned by the Graham family today.

Sir Henry Newbolt



The Newbolt plaque



Sir Henry Newbolt

Sir Henry Newbolt, honoured with a plaque on the side of Barclay's Bank, Lichfield Street, Bilston, was a poet best remembered for his 1892 work *Vital Lampada*, in which a future soldier learns about the selfless commitment to duty while playing cricket at school. He was the son of the vicar of St Mary's Church, the Rev Henry Francis Newbolt, and his second wife, Emily.

Sir Rowland Hill



Rowland Hill's plaque



Sir Rowland Hill

Sir Rowland Hill is honoured with a plaque in Lichfield Street, Wolverhampton. Born in Kidderminster, he moved to Wolverhampton as a child. He campaigned for a comprehensive reform of the postal system, based on the concept of penny postage and prepayment and is regarded as the creator of the modern postal service.

Benjamin Mander



The Mander plaque



Benjamin Mander

Benjamin Mander, who was born in 1752 and died in 1819, founded a japanning and varnish manufacturing company with his brother John in 1773. The business became one of the leading varnish manufacturers. The company later built the Mander Centre, where his plaque is mounted and the family name is now inextricably linked to the city of Wolverhampton.

Button Gwinnett



The Gwinnett plaque



Button Gwinnett

Button Gwinnett lived in Wolverhampton and married his wife Ann at St Peter's Church in the city in 1757. He later moved to America where he became involved in politics, and was one of the signatories of the US Declaration of Independence. His plaque can be seen in Exchange Street, Wolverhampton.

Society that helps put local history on a plate

SUHAIL Rana is a man with a lot on his plate at the moment. Or more precisely, that should be plates.

As chairman of Wolverhampton Civic Society, he is the ultimate custodian of the 90 blue plaques which adorn various parts of the city, but his work is far from complete.

"At the moment we have got around half a dozen plaques waiting to go up, one of them will be for the Rotary Club of Wolverhampton, that's something in progress, which we are hoping to put up outside the Britannia Hotel."

It seems that while there is a question about the future of the original

by Mark Andrews

blue-plaque scheme in London, Wolverhampton's version of the project, launched by the society's Rudi Herbert in 1983, is in rude health.

Not only are there plenty of sponsors willing to stump up the £500 cost of having a plaque installed, the society has also secured funding for a mobile phone app, which will allow people to access detailed information about the plaques' subjects as they walk around the town.

"There are always quite a few calls for people to be honoured," says Mr Rana. "The sponsorship usually comes from the families or companies concerned." There are now around 90

blue plaques dotted around Wolverhampton which, outside Birmingham, is by far the most popular such scheme around the West Midlands.

"I think the people of Wolverhampton are very proud of their city," says Mr Rana. "It had many famous factories like Sunbeam, and people want to celebrate it."

Express & Star founder Thomas Graham was the first man to be honoured in Wolverhampton, with his plaque on display outside the newspaper's offices in Queen Street. Other luminaries include industrialist Benjamin Mander, and Button Gwinnett who was one of the signatories on the US Declaration of Independence.

Queen Victoria



The visit plaque



Queen Victoria

Queen Victoria's visit to Wolverhampton is remembered with this plaque on the side of the HSBC bank in Queen Square. The Queen came to the town in 1866 to unveil a statue built in memory of her husband Prince Albert. The landmark statue of Prince Albert on horseback can still be seen in Queen Square in the city centre.

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Express & Star

COMPETITION

Tuning into this new audio range

MOBO award winner, Tinchy Stryder, joined forces with technology brand Goji last year and produced a dynamic and exciting collection of headphones and travel speakers, perfect for listening to music on the go.

The Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 range is available exclusively at Currys & PC World and features in ear, on ear and over ear headphones and two travel speakers.

To celebrate the arrival of spring, we're giving one lucky reader the chance to win the whole Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 range including one of each style of the headphones and both travel speakers as well as £300 to spend in store at

your nearest Currys and PC World. The collaboration between Tinchy Stryder and Goji, now in its second year, includes in-ear headphones priced at £29.99, on-ear headphones at £49.99 and over-ear headphones for £69.99. Available in three colours, rich red, dark black and polar white, the headphones provide a crystal clear sound; a tangle free cable and all come with a handy carry pouch.

The white travel speakers have built-in Bluetooth connectivity, come with rechargeable batteries and include a stylish carry pouch, retailing at £24.99. The black speakers also include a hands-free phone connection for conference calling and 12-hour playback, retailing at £39.99.

The Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 audio range has been designed with the style-conscious music lover in mind, balancing affordability and premium sound quality across all devices.

Tinchy Stryder comments: "I've spent a lot of time working closely with the Goji team to make sure that the headphones and speakers all look and sound great and I can't wait to get their feedback on the range."

"I'm proud of what Goji and I have achieved over the last year and I'm especially glad that the charity I work closely with - vnpsired - will benefit from the sales of my on-ear and over-ear headphones too."

• For the further details on the stylish range of products check out www.currys.co.uk/goji and www.pcworld.co.uk/goji

Currys PC World

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To be in with a chance of winning, simply answer this question:

How many colours does the Goji Tinchy Stryder: On Cloud 9 headphone range come in?

Send your answer on a postcard with your name, address and contact number to CURRYS Competition, Chronicle series (editorial), 51-53 Queen Street, Wolverhampton, WV1 1ES. Closing date: Thursday, April 11, 2012. No cash alternative. Usual rules apply. Editor's decision is final. Entrants must be 18 or over.

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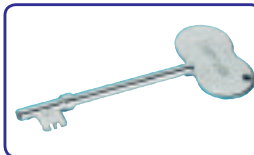
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MEMORY LANE



Christ Church, Lye, pictured in about 1900 before its redesign



The much-changed Christ Church as it looks today



The Rev James Bromley's tomb with the words: "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Stern minister loved by his flock

HIS freshness of heart and youthfulness of spirit led him to love and sympathise, especially with young men in whose service he spent himself and for whose sake he counted not his life dear that he might win them to Christ.

So reads the inscription on a tablet dedicated to the Rev James Bromley in Christ Church, Lye, which this year celebrates its 200th anniversary.

The few surviving historical documents from the period suggest the inhabitants were not exactly renowned for their hospitality, and the presence of a clergyman was not a welcome one.

In fact, Mr Bromley's predecessor, the not-so-popular Melsup Hill, is said to have been stoned out of the village by infuriated residents.

At this time the main industries of the area were nail-making, chain-making and coal mining and Mr Bromley arrived in 1844 into this harsh, industrial climate with strong views about how people should go about their daily lives.

Yet his methods clearly struck a chord with the populace. One of his first notable acts was to rescue two miners from drown-

by Peter Madeley

ing – a deed that immediately won the hearts of the people of Lye.

Mr Bromley set about the monumental task of attempting to civilise his unruly flock. Parishioners were taken down to the River Stour and shown how to bathe, and taught table manners while sharing food in his home.

The minister was a staunch advocate of abstinence, and despite his frail stature he would take stern measures to enforce this restraint when necessary.

He was known to enter local hosteleries and drag out unsuspecting church members who had reverted to their drunken ways.

Response

One tale in the memoirs of his successor, the Rev David Robertson, recounts him striking a church member across the back with his cane after seeing him playing the fool in the street.

The young man's response was to visit the priest the next morning and thank him!

Mr Bromley's dedication is probably best exemplified by his daily ritual of rising at 4am to hold services and preach to miners on their way to work. At a time when educa-

tional institutions were a rarity, he also acted as a teacher to the young men of Lye in an effort to stop them from hanging around in the streets.

During the early years of his tenure he increased the capacity of the church, making seating available for more than 1,000 parishioners – a quite remarkable figure when you consider the population of Lye was around 4,000 at the time.

Sadly, Mr Bromley died suddenly in his chair in December 19, 1865 after 21 years of devoted service, leaving a widow and 10 children. He was aged 54.

In a poignant twist, his sermon the previous Sunday was based on the text from Hebrews 11:4 from the King James Bible: "He being dead, yet speaketh."

Those words can still be seen to this day, carved on his tombstone outside the front of Christ Church.

The high esteem with which his congregation held him in was shown by the fact that almost £3,000 was raised for his family, at a time when the living wage was only £240 per year.

This figure would equate to around £175,000 today.

Thanks to Bob and Sheila Field for their help in researching this article.



The Rev James Bromley who died in his chair in 1865

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What's On! Walsall

REVIEW

Michael Jackson:
The Immortal World Tour
Cirque du Soleil,
B'ham NIA

WELL This Is It, the Cirque du Soleil tribute show to the legendary Michael Jackson.

Flashing lights – and costumes – and loud thumping music added to the atmosphere at the packed NIA and the show was not at all Bad.

With fewer than the usual Cirque tricks this really was just a reminder of Jacko's superb music and dance and the acrobatic circus-style tricks served to illustrate the media circus that surrounded his life.

The dancers were superb with custom-made costumes, ghoulish Thriller mummies, Smooth Criminal fedoras and Billie Jean sequined jackets.

The gates of the Neverland Ranch provided the backdrop to this extravagant travelling show and the tour aims to show Jackson's global message of love, peace and unity.

High energy routines to Smooth Criminal, Dangerous and Thriller contrasted with the poignant I Just Can't Stop Loving You which played as two of the performers showed their skills with a stunning rope acrobatic display.

The background film footage traced his life from The Jackson 5 days with the memorable I'll Be There to his later life. The downside was the frequent flashing lights which made it difficult to actually focus on the dance and the performers. But I am sure Jacko would think they did him proud.

SUE ATTWATER

Jasper beats the Brum with show of nostalgia

BRUMMIE funnyman Jasper Carrott has teamed up with one of his oldest friends for a new rock and pop show which is touring around Midlands venues in April and May.

Made In Brum will use music and comedy for a nostalgic look back at the people, places and songs which made the sixties Brumbeat scene such an influential one.

Jasper's lifelong pal Bev Bevan, formerly of Brummie rock icons The Move and ELO, has assembled an all-star band featuring ex-Move guitarist Trevor Burton, former guitarist of 'The Rockin' Berries' Geoff Turton, Quill vocalist Joy Strachan-Brain and rock 'n' roll singer Danny King.

The show promises great music, anecdotes and of course a lot of laughs along the way.

Tickets are going fast, with all three nights at Lichfield Garrick Theatre already sold out and only a few seats remaining for the additional show on May 9.

Other confirmed dates include Dudley Town Hall, April 11, Birmingham Alexandra Theatre, April 25 and 26, Wolverhampton Grand Theatre, May 25, and Sutton Coldfield Town Hall on May 30.

Tickets are available from the venues or on the booking hotline 0121 323 2200.



Brummie Jasper Carrott



Gwen Taylor, as Daisy Werthan, and Don Warrington, as Hoke Coleburn, in Driving Miss Daisy, which is being staged at Wolverhampton Grand Theatre. Photo: Nicholas Dawkes

Poignant drama is to drive in

HAVING enjoyed sell-out runs on Broadway and in the West End, David Esbjornson's award-winning production of Alfred Uhry's Driving Miss Daisy motors in to Wolverhampton Grand Theatre from Tuesday to Saturday, April 9 to 1, as part of an extended tour.

The production stars Gwen Taylor, as Daisy Werthan, and Don Warrington, from Rising Damp and Death in Paradise, as her driver Hoke Coleburn. The cast also features Ian Porter as Boolie Werthan.

The play tells of the relationship between an elderly Jewish widow and her African American chauffeur in 1940s Atlanta. It was a hit film starring Jessica Tandy and Morgan Freeman.

Classics, country and folk at venue

THE Senior Citizens Orchestra continue their series of monthly concerts this afternoon (Thursday) at 2pm, performing classical favourites at Forest Arts Centre in Leamore. Tickets cost £1 and are available on the door.

Forthcoming evening concerts at the Hawbusch Road venue include a St George's Day concert by the Staffordshire Band on April 19 (£5); country music band Knoxville Highway on May 3 (£5); and folk group Wild Irish on May 17 (£6).

Shelfield Male Voice Choir perform a 1.30pm concert on May 22 (£6). Call 0845 111 2898.

Peak District for rambling group

WALSALL Group of the Ramblers will be heading to Youlgreave, near Bakewell, for a seven and a half mile walk on Sunday.

This is walk on the Limestone Way through Lathkill Dale.

Non members are welcome and should contact the walk leaders for further information on 0121 440 7929

Further information about the Walsall Group is available at the website www.walsallramblers.co.uk

Acoustic appeal

Acoustic American singer Nell Bryden is appearing at The Slade Rooms, Wolverhampton on June 3. Tickets are £10.

She recently supported Gary Barlow at the Civic.

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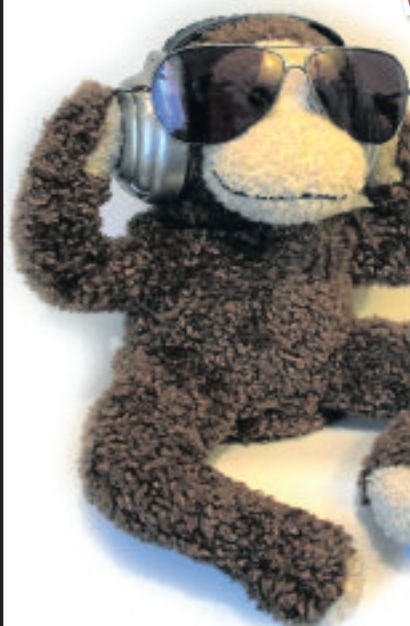
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CHOICE



Sid James

The Many Faces of Sid James BBC2, 7.30pm

Did Sid James have many faces? Only one really springs to mind, and although it was usually described in less-than-flattering terms (one critic once wrote that it resembled "an unmade bed"), it was, in a sense, his fortune. Sid was instantly recognisable, nobody else looked quite like him, which meant he was memorable – a trait every would-be star needs. This documentary examines the Carry On star's extraordinary life and career, from his early years in South Africa to his success as an actor in the UK.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Live. **11.30** Nigel Slater's Simple Cooking. **12.00** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **12.15** Football Focus. **1.00** Bargain Hunt. **2.00** Homes Under the Hammer. **3.00** Escape to the Country. **4.00** Final Score. **5.10** Pointless Celebrities. **5.55** BBC News: Regional News; Weather. **6.15** Doctor Who. Clara wants to see something awesome, so the Doctor whisks her off to the inhabited rings of the planet Akhaten – where an ancient ceremony soon turns very grim.

7.00 The Voice UK. Holly Willoughby and Reggie Yates host the second round of the talent contest, with judges Tom Jones, Jessie J, Will.i.am and Danny O'Donoghue.

8.30 The National Lottery: Who Dares Wins. Nick Knowles hosts the game show in which two pairs of strangers team up, each battling to outdo the other by listing as much as they know about a given subject.

9.20 Casualty. Two schoolgirls are brought in after being injured during a science exam, but when tensions rise between the pair, Zoe has to act as peacemaker to reconcile them.

10.10 BBC News: Weather. **10.30** Match of the Day. Including highlights of Reading v Southampton, National Lottery Update.

11.30 The Football League Show. Highlights of today's games in the Championship, League One and League Two. **12.55** Film: Deadline. (2009) 2.15 Weatherview. **2.20** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This Is BBC Two. **6.40** Film: Irene. (1940) **8.05** Film: Odette. (1950) **10.00** A History of Britain by Simon Schama. (R) **11.00** Climbing Great Buildings. (R) **11.30** Map Man. (R) **12.05** Country Show Cook Off. (R) **12.35** Country Show Cook Off. (R) **1.05** Country Show Cook Off. (R) **1.35** Country Show Cook Off. (R) **2.05** Country Show Cook Off. (R) **2.35** Mastermind. (R) **3.35** Film: The Great British Sewing Bee. (R) **4.05** Film: Carry On Again, Doctor. (1969) A disgraced surgeon sets up a clinic in the hope of promoting a slimming potion. Comedy, starring Sid James and Kenneth Williams.

6.05 Film: Carry On Again, Doctor. (1969) A disgraced surgeon sets up a clinic in the hope of promoting a slimming potion. Comedy, starring Sid James and Kenneth Williams.

7.30 The Many Faces of Sid James. Profile of the comic actor who is best known as the star of many Carry On films, tracing his career from his early days on Hancock's Half Hour to his 1970s sitcom Bless This House.

8.30 Dad's Army. The platoon is picked to appear in an army training film. (R)

9.00 Qi XL. Stephen Fry hosts an extended edition of the quiz, with Sandi Toksvig, Clive Anderson, Henning Wehn and Alan Davies answering questions on the topics of inequality and injustice. (R)

9.45 Film: Coriolanus. (2011) Premiere. A general's political career ends in exile, so he sides with an old foe to get revenge. Shakespearean drama, directed by and starring Ralph Fiennes. With Gerard Butler.

11.40 Film: Shout at the Devil. (1976) Action adventure, starring Lee Marvin. **1.50** This Is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Mickey Mouse Clubhouse. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Dino Dan. (R) **7.10** Animals. (R) **7.20** Animals. (R) **7.25** Bookaboo. **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) **8.05** Ultimate Spider-Man. **8.30** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **8.45** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **9.00** Jessie. **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **10.25** My Tasty Travels with Lynda Bellingham. (R) **11.25** Dinner Date. (R) **12.25** Countrywise. (R) **12.35** ITV News; Weather. **12.50** Film: Columbo: The Greenhouse Jungle. (1972) **2.25** Film: Escape to Victory. (1981) **4.30** The Chase. (R) **5.30** Regional Programme

6.00 You've Been Framed Rides Again! Harry Hill narrates a compilation show featuring some of the funniest clips sent in by viewers. (R)

7.00 Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway. The Gordie duo battle it out one final time in Ant v Dec: Into the Unknown and the cast of Jersey Boys perform. Jonathan Ross is in the voiceover booth.

8.20 The Cube. A former Butlins Redcoat and an estate agent try to complete a series of increasingly difficult tasks in the hope of winning a jackpot of £250,000. Phillip Schofield hosts.

9.20 The Jonathan Ross Show. With Ben Kingsley, Audrey Tautou, Carl Lumbly and Al-J. **10.20** ITV News: Weather. **10.35** Film: I Now Pronounce You Chuck & Larry. (2007) Comedy, starring Adam Sandler and Kevin James.

12.40 Jackpot247. **3.00** Ladette to Lady. Australia. (R) **3.50** ITV Nightscreen.

CHANNEL 4

6.10 The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** Freeports on 4. **7.05** British GT. **7.30** The Grid. **7.55** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.25** Frasier. (R) **8.55** Frasier. (R) **9.30** The Morning Line. **10.30** Saturday Brunch. **1.00** The Grand National. **5.10** Five Minutes to a Fortune. **6.10** Channel 4 News. **6.35** Stephen Fry's Best Gadgets. Highlights from Gadget Man, the show in which the broadcaster shares his passion for technology.

7.00 Sarah Beeny's Selling Houses. Homeowners in Maidstone, Kent, look around one another's properties for improvement ideas and then spruce up their own on a £1,000 budget, hoping to attract buyers.

8.00 Walking Through History. Tony Robinson embarks on a five-day expedition along Dorset's Jurassic coast to explore the county's role in protecting Britain from invasion during the Second World War.

9.00 Film: Taken. (2008) A former CIA agent puts his old skills to use in rescuing his daughter from a gang of European sex traffickers. Thriller, starring Liam Neeson, Famke Janssen and Maggie Grace.

10.50 Darren Brown: Miracles for Sale. The showman investigates the reality behind faith healing in America, and chooses an unsuspecting member of the British public to adopt the guise of pastor and "miracle" worker. (R)

12.25 The Grand National Highlights. **1.15** Film: Ju-On: The Grudge 2. (2005) **2.55** Hollyoaks. **5.05** Deal or No Deal. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake! **10.15** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.50** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.15** How Do They Do It? (R) **11.50** Film: Guns of the Magnificent Seven. (1969) **1.55** Film: David Copperfield. (2000) **5.35** 5 News Weekend. **5.40** Film: Raid on Rommel. (1971) **7.25** CSI: NY. A businesswoman is found dead under an ice sculpture with her heart completely frozen. The investigators identify liquid nitrogen as the cause and discover lots of suspects. (R)

8.10 5 News Weekend. **8.15** NCIS. The team flies to Israel, but receives a hostile reception from Ziva's father, who is the head of Mossad – and Gibbs is forced to make a tough decision. (R)

9.10 NCIS. Tony travels to North Africa on the trail of missing agent Ziva, but is taken hostage by terrorists in Somalia and given an ultimatum. (R)

10.10 Law & Order: Special Victims Unit. A serial killer targets the children of immigrants and the chief suspect's lawyer insists his client has been brainwashed by right-wing propaganda on a talk show.

11.05 Law & Order: Criminal Intent. Stevens suspects an innocent man may have been sent to the electric chair when the killing of a prostitute bears all the hallmarks of the murders for which he was executed.

12.05 SuperCasino. **4.00** Nick's Quest. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.25** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.35** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hana's Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00** Merlin **8.30** Film: Shrek Forever After (2010) **10.00** Live at the Apollo **11.00** Family Guy **11.45** American Dad! **BBC Four** **7.00** South Pacific **8.00** David Attenborough's First Life **9.00** Arne Dahl. New series. Swedish crime thriller, starring Irene Lindh. **10.30** Goodbye Television Centre **ITV2** **1.45** Film: Peter Pan (2003) **4.00** You've Been Framed! **6.00** Film: Uncle Buck (1989). Family comedy, starring John Candy. **8.00** Film: The Mummy (1999). Action adventure, starring Brendan Fraser. **10.20** Celebrity Juice **11.10** Plebs **11.40** Film: The Interpreter (2004) **ITV3** **2.55** A Touch of Frost **4.55** Agatha Christie's Marple **7.00** Lewis. A student and a well-known criminal are murdered. **8.00** Endeavour **11.00** A Touch of Frost **ITV4** **11.00** Live Indian Premier League Cricket. Delhi Daredevils v Rajasthan Royals and Chennai Super Kings v Mumbai Indians. **8.00** British Touring Car Championship Highlights **9.30** Film: Carlito's Way (1993) **E4** **3.05** Charmed **4.00** Rules of Engagement **5.30** The Mindy Project **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.00** Youngers **7.30** Happy Endings **8.00** How I Met Your Mother **8.30** 2 Broke Girls **9.00** Film: Trading Places (1985) **11.20** The Big Bang Theory **Film4** **2.55** Murder at the Gallop (1963) **4.35** Spirited Away (2002) **7.00** The Day the Earth Stood Still (2008) **8.00** What Lies Beneath (2000) **11.30** Sorority Row (2009)

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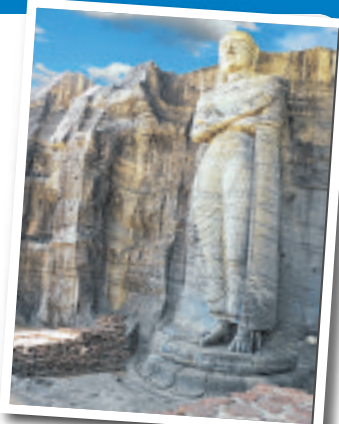
Sri Lanka

Join this comprehensive tour and discover the delights of old Ceylon with its sacred caves, ancient temples and lost cities, ending with two days relaxing on one of Sri Lanka's idyllic tropical beaches. Travel on return scheduled flights from London Heathrow and stay in charming hand-picked three-star hotels, with daily breakfast and dinner included.

One of the first adventures on the itinerary is the famous Pinnawela Elephant Orphanage which boasts a herd of over 75 animals from matriarchs to calves and their daily bath in the river provides a stunning photo opportunity.

Some of the other included tours are to the 600 foot granite tower called Sigiriya, or the Lion Rock, known for its ancient murals of 'cloud maidens'; to Kandy, Sri Lanka's last Royal capital; to the amazing cave temples of Dambulla, a UN World Heritage site; and to a well-known tea estate and spice garden, staying at the four-star Grand Hotel, originally the summer home of one of the Governors of Ceylon.

For a different sort of experience, two nights are reserved at the Safari Hotel, which has a pool, bar and restaurant overlooking the Tiffa Lake. Just 45 minutes from the Yala National Park this is the base for an early morning start to the jeep safari in the hope of seeing leopard, elephants, saltwater crocodiles, wild boar, sloth bears, monitor lizards and a huge variety of birdlife. The three-star superior Palms Hotel in the beach resort of Beruwela is the final port of call, allowing for two days of rest and relaxation before the journey home.



Thirteen days **£1,599**
Various departure dates

PRICE INCLUDES:

- Return flights
- Nine nights half-board accommodation
- Guided visits to Pinnawela elephant orphanage, Sigiriya Rock, Dambulla cave temples,
- Kandy city tour and Botanical Gardens
- Visit to a tea estate and spice garden
- Jeep safari in Yala National Park
- Galle city tour
- Services of a Riviera tour manager
- Single rooms subject to availability – supplement applies

Organised by Riviera Travel (ABTA V4744 ATOL 3430)

South Africa

South Africa is a country five times the size of Britain and it has so much to offer the visitor, including breath-taking wildlife, stunning scenery, a huge sense of history, bustling cities plus first class food and wine.

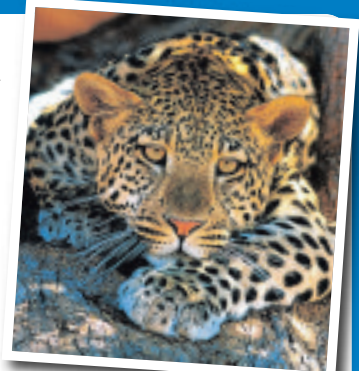
The holiday includes 13 nights bed and breakfast accommodation in specially selected three and four-star hotels, three evening meals and a variety of stunning excursions.

For most visitors the highlight will be a full day's game drive that brings the chance to see the sweeping savannah and muddy waterholes lined with animals, and to marvel at the incredible 150 mammal and 500 bird species that live in the Kruger National Park, including the 'big five': elephant, lion, rhino, leopard and buffalo. Rooms are reserved at the three-star superior Hippo Hollow Country Estate, located in the midst of lush forest on the banks of the Sabie River. It's open-air terrace overlooks the grounds and river, so watch out for the hippos!

Those interested in history will be intrigued by the visit to Zululand, passing through Swaziland en route, to reach the haunting battlefields of Isilandwana and Rorke's Drift. In 1879 these two battles, just a day apart, became a defining moment for the British Empire and the specialist Zulu guide will make those desperate encounters come alive.

A well-organised schedule of tours combined with free time in Cape Town, Johannesburg, in Knysna on the coast and at the Kruger National Park means everyone will experience the very heart of South Africa on this 16-day adventure.

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* varies according to departure date – please go to website for the latest availability and prices

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SUNDAY'S TV 7.04.13

Listings supplied by Press Association

CHOICE



Stephen Mulhern

Catchphrase
ITV, 6.45pm

'It's good, but it's not right,' remains one of the best-loved game show catchphrases of the past 20 years, largely because of host Roy Walker. Between 1986 and 1999, the Northern Irish comedian owned that jovial series, but while Nick Weir and Mark Curry later attempted to breathe new life into the format, by the end of December 2002, it seemed that was that. Now, after a long rest, it's Stephen Mulhern's turn asking contestants and audiences to "say what they see". As ever, players compete to guess the familiar phrases hidden in animated clues.

BBC1

6.00 Breakfast. **7.55** Match of the Day. (R) **9.00** The Andrew Marr Show. **10.00** The Big Questions. **11.00** Flog It! **12.00** BBC News. **Weather.** **12.10** Points of View. **12.25** Countryfile. (R) **1.20** Bargain Hunt. **2.20** Homes Under the Hammer. (R) **3.20** Walk on the Wild Side - Best in Show. **3.50** Fake Britain. (R) **4.20** Escape to the Country. (R) **5.20** Songs of Praise. **6.05** **Deadly 60 on a Mission.** Wild alligators, bobcats, salamanders and rattlesnakes in Florida. **6.35** **BBC News:** Regional News; Weather. **7.00** **Countryfile.** Matt Baker and Julia Bradbury are in Northamptonshire, visiting the Great Ouse and the county's hidden heritage sites. Tom Heap reports on Britain's booming deer population. **8.00** **Antiques Roadshow.** Fiona Bruce and the experts visit Cheltenham Town Hall, where items include a table with carved horse hooves for legs and espionage messages used in the Second World War. **9.00** **The Village.** John is drinking heavily as the Middleton farm falls on hard times, leading to a shocking revelation about his past mistakes. Caro's mental health takes a downturn. **10.00** **BBC News:** Regional News; Weather. **10.25** **Match of the Day 2.** Including action from Tottenham Hotspur v Everton. **11.45** **Football League Trophy Highlights.** **12.25** The Sky at Night. **12.45** **Film:** Evening. (2007) **2.35** Weatherview. **2.40** BBC News.

BBC2

6.00 This is BBC Two. **6.30** **Film:** Hell Drivers. (1957) **8.15** Gardeners' World. (R) **8.45** The A to Z of TV Gardening. **9.30** The Beechgrove Garden. **10.00** Saturday Kitchen Best Bites. **11.30** Paul Hollywood's Bread. (R) **12.00** EastEnders. (R) **1.55** Triathlon. **3.30** The Great Rift: Africa's Wild Heart. (R) **4.30** Secrets of Our Living Planet. (R) **5.30** Coast. (R) **6.30** **Donald Campbell: Speed King.** Profile of the man who set eight world speed records on water and land in the 1950s and 60s, using archive footage and first-hand testimonies of those who knew him. (R) **7.30** **Live MotoGP.** Matt Roberts presents coverage of the Qatar Grand Prix at the Losail International Circuit in Doha (Start-time 8.00pm), where the opening race of the season takes place. **9.00** **Toughest Place to Be a Fisherman - The Return.** Andy Giles revisits the Sierra Leone village he worked in 18 months ago. **10.00** **Mock the Week Looks Back at Science and Technology.** Another themed selection from the show's archives. **10.30** **It's Kevin.** Comedian Kevin Eldon takes a trip backstage with trusty studio caretaker Bob. **11.00** **Film: Dead Poets Society.** (1989) A teacher at a staid New England school in the 1950s raises eyebrows by encouraging his pupils to live life beyond their expectations. Drama, with Robin Williams and Ethan Hawke. **1.00** **Sky Zone: A Very British Wedding.** (2007) **2.00** **Film:** City. (R) **3.00** This is BBC Two.

ITV

6.00 CITV: Jungle Junction. **6.15** Jungle Junction. **6.25** The Hive. (R) **6.35** The Hive. (R) **6.45** Dino Dan. (R) **7.00** Dino Dan. (R) **7.10** Animals. (R) **7.20** Animals. (R) **7.25** Bookaboo. **7.40** Matt Hatter Chronicles. (R) **8.05** Kick Buttowski - Suburban Daredevil. **8.15** Kick Buttowski - Suburban Daredevil. **8.30** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **8.45** Almost Naked Animals. (R) **9.00** The Aquabats Super Show. (R) **9.25** ITV News. **9.30** The Jeremy Kyle Show USA. (R) **10.25** Dickinson's Real Deal. (R) **11.25** ITV News: Weather. **11.35** **Film:** Scorpion King. (2002) Fantasy, starring Dwayne Johnson. **6.15** **Regional Programme;** Weather. **6.30** **ITV News;** Weather. **6.45** **Catchphrase.** **7.30** **Off Their Rockers.** New series. Senior citizens play pranks on the public. **8.00** **Fowl's War.** The detective is drawn into the strange murder of a former high-ranking Nazi who had been hired by MI5 due to his expert knowledge of Soviet intelligence. Last in the series. **10.00** **Perspectives: Portillo on Picasso.** Michael Portillo explores the life and work of Pablo Picasso. **11.00** **ITV News;** Weather. **11.15** **Who Killed My Dad? - The Death of Terry Lloyd.** The war reporter's daughter returns to the scene of his death in Iraq. (R) **12.25** The Store. **2.30** Monk. (R) **3.10** ITV Nightscreen. **5.05** The Jeremy Kyle Show. (R)

CHANNEL 4

6.00 The Treacle People. (R) **6.10** The Hoobs. (R) **6.35** FIA GT1. **7.30** Triathlon. **8.00** Everybody Loves Raymond. (R) **8.30** Frasier. (R) **9.00** Frasier. (R) **9.30** Sunday Brunch. **12.00** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **12.25** The Big Bang Theory. (R) **1.55** The Simpsons. (R) **1.25** The Simpsons. (R) **1.55** **Film:** A Knight's Tale. (2001) Comedy adventure, starring Heath Ledger. **4.30** Deal or No Deal. **5.30** The Real King's Speech. (R) **6.30** **Channel 4 News.** **7.00** **Nick Hewer: Countdown to Freetown.** The Countdown host embarks on a mission to tow an industrial saw and generator 5,000 miles to the capital of Sierra Leone, where he will present his gift to a young carpenter. **8.00** **The Secret Millions.** Dave Fishwick opens a job centre to find work for young people from challenging backgrounds, aiming to introduce employers to candidates they would not normally consider hiring. **9.00** **Film: The King's Speech.** (2010) Premiere. The son of George VI seeks the help of an eccentric Australian speech therapist as he rises suddenly to the throne. Fact-based drama, with Colin Firth and Geoffrey Rush. **11.20** **Film: Nine to Five.** (1980) Three female office employees grow weary of their chauvinistic boss and set out to teach him a lesson. Comedy, starring Dolly Parton, Jane Fonda, Lily Tomlin and Dabney Coleman. **1.20** **Film: Sherrybaby.** (2006) **3.00** Southland. (R) **3.40** St Elsewhere. (R) **4.30** Come Dine with Me. (R) **5.25** Deal or No Deal. (R)

CHANNEL 5

6.00 Milkshake!: Peppa Pig. **6.05** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **6.15** Fifi and the Flowertots. (R) **6.25** Bert and Ernie's Great Adventures. (R) **6.30** The Mr Men Show. (R) **6.45** Olive the Ostrich. (R) **6.50** Abby's Flying Fairy School. (R) **7.00** Roobarb and Custard Too. (R) **7.05** Bananas in Pyjamas. (R) **7.20** Animal Antics. (R) **7.25** Noddy in Toyland. (R) **7.40** City of Friends. (R) **7.50** Little Princess. (R) **8.05** The Adventures of Bottle Top Bill and His Best Friend Corky. (R) **8.20** Angelina Ballerina. (R) **8.30** Mio Mao. (R) **8.40** Castle Farm. (R) **8.45** Rupert Bear. (R) **9.00** Ben and Holly's Little Kingdom. (R) **9.15** Toby's Travelling Circus. (R) **9.30** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **9.45** Jelly Jam. (R) **10.00** Power Rangers Samurai. (R) **10.35** Batman: The Brave and the Bold. **11.00** Cowboy Builders. (R) **12.00** **Film:** Pool Party. Grand Adventure: The Search for Christopher Robin. (1997) **1.30** **Film:** Adventures in Babysitting. (1987) **3.20** **Film:** Tinker Bell and the Lost Treasure. (2008) **4.55** **5** News Weekend. **5.00** **Film:** Practical Magic. (1998) **6.50** **Film:** Miss Congeniality 2: Armed and Fabulous. (2005) Comedy sequel, starring Sandra Bullock. **9.00** **Once Upon a Time.** New series. The fantasy drama returns. The people of Storybrooke remember their past lives. **10.00** **Person of Interest.** **10.55** **Film:** Bulletproof. (1996) Action comedy, starring Adam Sandler. **12.35** **Camptown PD.** **1.05** SuperCasino. **4.00** Nick's Quest. (R) **4.50** County Secrets. (R) **5.05** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.15** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.25** Hana's Helpline. (R) **5.35** Roary the Racing Car. (R) **5.50** Hana's Helpline. (R)

DIGITAL

BBC Three **7.00** The Voice UK **8.35** **Film:** How to Train Your Dragon (2010) **10.00** Barely Legal Drivers **11.00** Family Guy **11.50** American Dad! **BBC Four** **7.00** Vatican - The Hidden World. **8.00** Mark Lawson Talks to Michael Ball **9.00** Motor Racing at the BBC: That Petrol Emotion **9.30** Caravans: A British Love Affair **10.30** From the Sea to the Land Beyond: Britain's Coast on Film **11.45** Les Mis at 25: Matt Lucas Dreams the Dream **ITV2** **3.50** Ant & Dec's Saturday Night Takeaway **5.10** You've Been Framed! **6.10** **Film:** Babe (1995) **8.00** You've Been Framed! Funniest 100 **9.00** **Film:** The Holiday (2006) **11.40** Celebrity Juice **ITV3** **2.50** **Film:** The Pure Hell of St Trinian's (1960) **4.40** Wycliffe **5.50** Agatha Christie's Poirot **7.55** An Audience with Diana Ross **9.00** **Film:** Bird on a Wire (1990) **11.15** Agatha Christie's Marple **ITV4** **11.00** Live Indian Premier League Cricket. **8.00** Brian Lara: Sports Life Stories **9.00** Cycling: Paris-Roubaix Highlights **10.00** **Film:** American Gangster (2007) **E4** **5.00** Revenge **6.00** The Big Bang Theory **7.00** New Girl **7.30** The Mindy Project **8.00** **Film:** Big Momma's House (2000) **10.00** Rude Tube **11.00** The Body Shocking Show **11.30** The Big Bang Theory **Film4** **3.00** The Cat Returns (2002) **4.35** The Golden Compass (2007) **6.45** The Jewel of the Nile (1985) Comedy adventure sequel, starring Michael Douglas. **9.00** Unknown (2011) **11.15** Memento (2000)

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What's On!

Film Choices

MONDAY

Lone Rider, Channel 5, 3.20pm

A veteran of the American Civil War returns to his home town to discover a former friend, who has become a ruthless land baron, is intent on seizing his father's ranch, forcing the hardened soldier to take up arms once more to protect his family and property. Western, starring Lou Diamond Phillips. (2008)

Young Guns, Channel 5, 11pm

Petty crook Billy the Kid is taken in by English farmer John Tunstall and given a job as a ranch hand. However, when Tunstall is murdered by a business rival, Billy and the rest of his 'regulators' set out to avenge his death, leading them into conflict with the law – and marking the start of Billy's notoriety as a gunslinger. Western, with Emilio Estevez. (1988)

TUESDAY

The Ladykillers, BBC1, 11.35pm

A criminal mastermind posing as a professor rents a room in the Deep South from an elderly woman in a bid to tunnel through her basement to a nearby casino. However, the unsuspecting landlady unintentionally gets in the way of his plans. Tom Hanks stars. (2004)



Young Guns, Monday, Channel 5, 11pm

WEDNESDAY

Ladder 49, BBC1, 11.05pm

A fireman becomes trapped in a burning building and, aware his chances of survival are slim, reflects on the events that led him to his chosen career. He recalls his rise from the station's laughing stock to a respected member of the team, and the effect his dangerous profession has had on his family. Meanwhile, his mentor is battling to get him out of the building alive. Drama, with Joaquin Phoenix and John Travolta. (2004)

THURSDAY

One Mile Away, Channel 4, 11.10pm

Penny Woolcock's documentary charts the efforts of warring gangs the Burger Bar Boys and the Johnson Crew to bring peace to their neighbourhoods in inner-city Birmingham. (2012)

FRIDAY

Paycheck, BBC1, 11.55pm

An engineer carries out a top-secret job on the understanding that his knowledge of the task will be erased from his mind afterwards to protect his employer's intellectual property. However, waking after the memory-wiping procedure, he is shocked to learn he had somehow agreed to waive the huge payment due to him – and is wanted for a murder he does not remember committing. John Woo's thriller, starring Ben Affleck, Uma Thurman and Aaron Eckhart. (2003)

Pick of the Week

Boxing match sets the alarm bells ringing

There's nothing like a good, old-fashioned reunion, is there? At first glance, The Security Men doesn't seem to be a reunion, but if you look a little deeper, there are a couple...

Initially, you may think that the pairing of Caroline Aherne and Bobby Ball is a strange one. Okay, so they're both well-known for their collaborations with others – Ball with his long-standing comedy partner Tommy Cannon and Aherne most notably with Craig Cash, with whom she created The Royle Family – but their comedy styles have little in common.

But they're together for this new offering, and not for the first time either – their first collaboration came with The Fastest Man in Britain, which aired in 2009.

That one-off comedy drama also featured Brendan O'Carroll, who appears here too, and was co-written by Aherne and Joe Pope; they've created this series, for which ITV's head honchos have very high hopes indeed. ITV's director of entertainment and comedy Elaine Bedell says of it: "We're absolutely

delighted to be working with Caroline and Jeff, two writers at the top of their game.

"I'm a huge fan of both and believe together they have created some of the best comedy scripts for television.

"Combined with the talent and wit of our cast, The Security Men is a very fresh and exciting project for ITV."

Sadly Aherne won't be acting in the series, but Ball and O'Carroll will be joined on screen by Paddy McGuinness, Peter Wight and Dean Andrews.

The plot of each episode focuses on the working lives of security guards working the night shift at a fictional Manchester shopping centre called The Whittington.

The guards are supposed to spend their time making sure the place is safe and burglar-free; in reality, they're a bunch of work-shy individuals who would prefer to avoid working at all – in fact, they expend far more energy avoiding the watchful eye of their boss than they do carrying out their duties.

The first episode sees them desperate to watch a televised boxing match, and think they've worked out a way to make it possible – if they switch off the alarms they can enter an electrical store and simply watch the bout on one of its big-screen, surround-sound, state-of-the-art TVs.

What can possibly go wrong? Well, as you may have guessed, an awful lot in a very short space of time...

If The Security Men takes off, will this mean the end of The Royle Family? Aherne hasn't made a decision on that, but seeing as the last few Christmas specials featuring the layabout clan have been rather disappointing, few would be sad to say farewell to them – and perhaps the writer/director/actress could use a fresh start with new characters.

This is her first new comedy series for more than a decade, since the short-lived Dossie and Joe in 2002, and she could probably use a hit. Let's hope The Security Men is it – and is worth waiting for.



Bobby Ball and Brendan O'Carroll star in The Security Men, Friday, ITV, 9pm

Best of the Rest

MONDAY

Broadchurch

ITV, 9pm

ITV isn't giving much away about this drama, and thank goodness for that. You may think you want to know exactly what's going on, but take a second to think about that – do you really want to know every single intricate twist and turn? Do you really want to know who killed Danny Latimer before anybody else? Okay, so it might be fine and dandy to have the kudos of being 'in the know', but that would soon wear off, and you'd be left wondering why you'd spoilt the suspense for yourself. So... what can we tell you about this week's plot? Well, the locals are about to gather together to mourn Danny's passing. But while doing that, a new suspect in his murder comes to light.

The Prisoners

BBC1, 9pm

This new, three-part documentary series focuses on convicts stuck in a vicious circle – some of them, it seems, are no sooner let out onto the streets before reoffending and ending up back inside. The opening edition takes a look at the lives of inmates at Holloway Prison in London, which in the past has housed such infamous figures as Ruth Ellis, Myra Hindley, Diana Mosley and Maxine Carr. The women featured here aren't as notorious, but their lives are extraordinary in a way. Jayde is only 18 but this is her sixth spell in jail, while 23-year-old Crystal claims she feels at home at Holloway, having been a regular there for the past six years.

TUESDAY

UEFA Champions League Live

ITV, 7.30pm

Galatasaray host European giants Real Madrid in this quarter-final second-leg clash at the Turk Telekom Arena in Istanbul. With last week's reverse fixture at the Bernabeu fresh in their memories, both clubs will be looking to do enough here to book a place in the competition's semi-finals, and take the next step toward its conclusion at Wembley Stadium next month. Whatever the outcome of the first leg, the Turkish outfit will have to improve upon their home form in this season's competition, having won just once in front of their own fans, that being a 1-0 victory in the group stage against a depleted Manchester United side.

WEDNESDAY

Victoria Wood's Nice Cup of Tea

BBC1, 9pm

Apparently, this two-part documentary had the working title The Great British Cuppa, which made it sound like a televised contest to be judged by Mary Berry, with marks deducted for letting the leaves stew too long. Instead though, it's a two-part documentary which sees one national institution, Victoria Wood, celebrating the history of another, the cup of tea. But it seems the humble brew

hasn't always had such a cosy image. In the past, tea has helped to trigger wars – and aided Britain in winning them. Victoria's quest to find out how this small, exotic plant came to pay such a big part in British life takes her from the back streets of Kolkata to the mega city of Shanghai.

THURSDAY

James May's Man Lab

BBC2, 8pm

In Poole, 1973, James May Snr, lost his wedding ring on the beach at Sandbanks. Thankfully, his quick-thinking wife returned with a deep fat fryer basket so they could sieve the sand and find the ring. Alas, they failed. So, with the aid of geomorphologist Vincent May (no relation), James May Jnr pulls out all the stops in the hope of finding his dad's beloved ring four decades on. He also develops a gadget (aka model train) which can filter junk mail, and recaptures the spirit of pirate radio, with the aid of a canal barge, a 3G box of tricks, six sim cards and plenty of other hi-tech gubbins.



Jodie Marsh: Bullied, Thursday, Channel 5, 10pm

Jodie Marsh: Bullied

Channel 5, 10pm

Last week we saw glamour model-turned-bodybuilder Jodie Marsh jet off to the USA on a fact-finding mission; she wanted to know how the American education system was dealing with bullying. What she discovered was rather enlightening, and now she wants to introduce some of its methods to the UK, where almost half of children claim they have suffered from some form of bullying. Jodie visits Carlton Community College in Barnsley, a school with a troubled past whose new headmaster, Neil Hutchinson, wants to turn its fortunes around – can Jodie and her anti-bullying campaigner friend Alex give him the help he needs?

FRIDAY

Isaac Newton: The Last Magician

BBC2, 9pm

At first glance, the title of this one-off documentary may seem a bit unlikely. After all, Isaac Newton is considered to be a genius, a great rationalist who laid the foundation for many scientific and mathematical breakthroughs. So, surely he didn't have a sideline in pulling rabbits out of hats? Well, no, but it turns out he did have an interest in the alchemy, heretical religion and the occult. His more controversial obsessions were glossed over in the wake of his death to protect his reputation, but when economist John Maynard Keynes bought Newton's papers in 1936, the truth began to emerge – and this documentary offers further insights into a complicated man.

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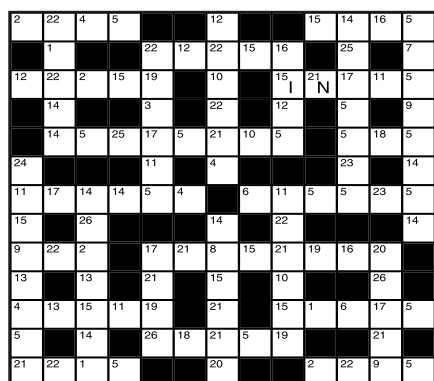
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Brain Gym

No.215

Codeword

Each number in the grid represents a different letter of the alphabet and every letter of the alphabet is used. Use the given letter(s) to the right of the main grid to start you off.



LAST WEEK'S SOLUTION:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
W	F	K	I	Z	T	Q	V	C	L	N	E	R
B	X	M	H	U	Y	A	S	O	P	D	G	J

Double Crossword

Choose either quick or cryptic clues - both fit the same grid.

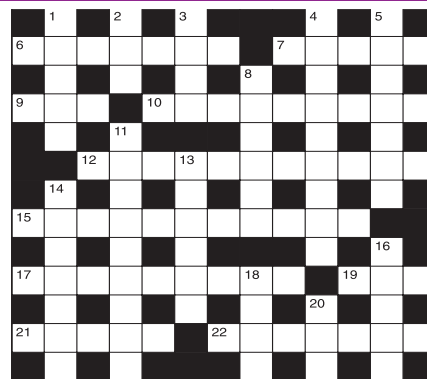
Cryptic Clues:

Across

6. Produce an eviction order? (4,3)
 7. Penny loaf? How funny! (5)
 9. How a motorist can correct a glaring error (3)
 10. She gets the theatre in an uproar (9)
 12. It describes Adam or I (5,6)
 15. Decline to acknowledge applause - and retire! (4,4,3)
 17. Rose spray? (9)
 19. The last thing one aims for (3)
 21. Feeling irritable? (5)
 22. Feeling fed-up? (7)

Down

1. His victims lose heart (5)
 2. Person who discredits an old woman (3)
 3. One type has four heels, another none at all (4)
 4. It's for the rest of the cast (5,4)
 5. His fare is too much (7)
 8. Fit a support with hesitation (6)
 11. I'll get him prepared for publicity's glare (9)
 13. Capital form of punishment (6)
 14. They're trodden underfoot (7)
 16. One I form out of uniformity (5)
 18. It's flat and square (4)
 20. He gets red if a stranger addresses him! (3)



Quick Clues:

Across

6. Advance (7)
 7. Body of troops (5)
 9. Employ (3)
 10. Cancellation (9)
 12. Theory (11)
 15. Introductory (11)
 17. Perilous (9)
 19. Fresh (3)
 21. Set free (5)
 22. Shake (7)

Down

1. Attire (5)
 2. Perform (3)
 3. Average (4)
 4. Sleeping room (9)
 5. Belief (7)
 8. Morose (6)
 11. Express regret (9)
 13. Photographic device (6)
 14. Maker (7)
 16. Trifling (5)
 18. Incite (4)
 20. Pig-pen (3)

Sudoku

		5		2	8			4
	6	1					2	
2		7	4		3	5		
			2				4	8
		8		5				
7	4				6			
	3			8	1	9		2
8			9	7		4		

Fill in the grid below so that every column, every row and each of the 3x3 boxes contains all the digits from 1 to 9.

LAST WEEK'S SOLUTIONS >

1	3	5	9	8	2	7	4	6
8	7	2	5	4	6	1	9	3
4	9	6	7	1	3	8	5	2
9	4	7	1	3	5	6	2	8
3	5	8	6	2	7	4	1	9
6	2	1	8	9	4	3	7	5
7	1	3	2	6	9	5	8	4
5	8	9	4	7	8	2	3	1
2	8	4	3	5	1	9	6	7

LAST WEEK'S CROSSWORD SOLUTIONS: CRYPTIC - Across: 7 Get one's hand in; 8 Admirers; 9 Well; 10 Absent; 12 Stress; 14 Seance; 16 Titan; 18 Peru; 20 Absconds; 22 Archaeologist. Down: 1 Readable; 2 Iodine; 3 Code; 4 Chess set; 5 Answer; 6 Till; 11 Teenager; 13 Slap-dash; 15 Nought; 17 Trough; 19 Earl; 21 Sole. QUICK - Across: 7 Overstatement; 8 Pretence; 9 Ease; 10 Siesta; 12 Greedy; 14 Infant; 16 Humble; 18 Plot; 20 Navigate; 22 Contemplation. Down: 1 Aversion; 2 Grails; 3 Stun; 4 Strength; 5 Impede; 6 Onus; 11 Autonomy; 13 Dilation; 15 Astute; 17 Mighty; 19 Loot; 21 Vile.

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Home of Property

Four-bed detached with double garage



Elegant lounge, 15ft 11in by 12ft 2in, with marble effect hearth at the property

VIEWING is recommended on this four bedroom detached family home with double garage in Besom Way, Cheslyn Hay, which is for sale priced at £315,000.

The property has central heating and double glazing with accommodation comprising of entrance hall, guest WC, lounge, dining room, conservatory, study, fitted breakfast kitchen, utility room, master bedroom with refitted en-suite, three further bedrooms and bathroom.

The lounge, 15ft 11in by 12ft 2in, has a stone effect fire surround with marble effect hearth and inset with coal effect living flame gas fire. The dining room is 11ft 5in by 10ft 6in and the study 6ft 11in by 7ft 8in.

The breakfast kitchen, 13ft 11in by 16ft 9in, has a range of wall and base units with two wine racks, granite work surfaces, double sink drainer with

mixer tap extended to form centre island and breakfast bar and built-in appliances including double oven, five ring gas hob with extractor hood over, dishwasher and fridge freezer.

There is also a utility room with base units, work surfaces, stainless steel sink drainer with mixer tap and space and plumbing for washing machine and tumble dryer. The conservatory, 12ft 7in by 10ft 2in, has French doors to the garden and the guest WC a toilet and wash hand basin in vanity unit.

On the first floor the master bedroom has a white en-suite with double shower cubicle, pedestal wash hand basin and WC and there are three more bedrooms and a bathroom with white suite of panelled bath with shower unit and screen, pedestal wash hand basin and WC.

There is a driveway to the garage, lawned garden and to the rear a decked sun terrace with lawn and timber summerhouse. Call Dixons on 01543 572251.

Contemporary feel of a Willenhall semi



This semi-detached home in Willenhall is on the market for offers around £129,995

A RE-MODERNISED semi-detached house in a cul-de-sac location in Willenhall and described as "showhome style" is for sale based on offers in the region of £129,995.

The property in Milcote Drive has an open plan lounge diner, refitted kitchen with integrated appliances, three double bedrooms, large bathroom, front and rear low maintenance gardens with garage.

On the ground floor the lounge diner, 18ft 8in by 10ft, has an electric fire with fitted surround and patio doors to a conservatory with French doors to the rear while the

kitchen - 10ft 6in by 7ft 1in - has a range of wall and base units with roll-top work surfaces, integrated dishwasher and fridge freezer, single drainer sink and gas hob with electric oven and extractor hood.

On the first floor are three bedrooms and a bathroom with refitted suite comprising spa bath, walk-in shower cubicle and WC.

Outside to the front is an off-road parking area with slate border and to the rear a paved patio, raised paved area, trees, plants and shrubs.

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Offers around £99,950

THE GROVE, YEW TREE



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- Two bed semi • C/H & D/G • Hall
- Lounge • Kitchen
- Bathroom • Garden
- Driveway
- Energy Rating D (58)

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DORA STREET, PLECK



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ARCHER ROAD, LEAMORE



REDUCED REDUCED REDUCED

- Three bed • C/H & D/G • Hall
- Lounge • Dining Room
- Kitchen • Outhouse/ Utility
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- Garden • Energy Rating C (69)

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Victoria Croft is the larger of the two properties to go on show



The property known as Victoria Croft is now priced £350,000

One special event being held for two properties

AN 'open houses' event is being held this weekend for two next-door properties in Eccleshall Road, Great Bridgeford – both of which have been reduced in price.

Owned by the same family Bridge House, which was £207,000, is now £200,000, and Victoria Croft has been reduced from £365,000 to £350,000.

The open house in this popular village will be on Saturday and Sunday between 11am and 3pm.

Victoria Croft is a detached home with an impressive entrance hall with vaulted ceiling, modern fitted breakfast kitchen, separate dining room, lounge with traditional style fireplace, conservatory, utility room, double garage and ground floor shower room.

Spiral

A spiral staircase in the hall leads to a separate study/office from the rest of the first floor, which includes a master bedroom with ensuite, three further bedrooms and family bathroom.

With gardens to all sides and ample off road parking, the location and accommodation of the property makes for an excellent family home.

Bridge House is a detached cottage which includes a kitchen/diner, lounge, conservatory, three bedrooms and bathroom.

The tastefully presented home includes some charming features and an impressive rear garden as well as off road parking, central heating and double glazing.

Call Bridgefords on 01785 242426.



Bridge House is now available at a reduced asking price of £200,000

Generous plot for a three-bed home



This property in Hednesford is on the market with Dixons priced at £180,000

PRICED at £180,000, this three bedroom detached house in Station Road, Hednesford which sits on a generous sized plot is being sold with no upward chain.

The property benefits from central heating, majority double glazing and cavity wall insulation with accommodation briefly comprising of entrance porch, hall, guest WC, lounge, kitchen diner, utility/verandah, bathroom, two double bedrooms and single bedroom, plus a driveway, garage and front and rear gardens.

On the ground floor the guest WC has a wash hand basin and toilet while the lounge – 19ft by 8ft 2in – has a tiled fireplace for a real fire and the kitchen diner measuring 10ft 5in by 12ft 11in has a

range of wall and base units with display cabinets, work surfaces with stainless steel sink drainer and space for cooker with extractor hood over.

There is also a utility room/verandah with Belfast sink, walk-in storage cupboard, space and plumbing for washing machine and door into garage.

On the first floor are the three bedrooms and a bathroom with panelled bath with shower unit, pedestal wash hand basin and WC.

Outside the rear garden has a paved patio area with steps leading up to a shaped lawn area with display borders including shrubs and trees and a further paved patio area.

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Home of Property

Semi-rural location for barn conversion

AN IMPRESSIVE four bedroom barn conversion in a semi-rural location just over a mile from Sedgley is on the market based on offers around £385,000.

The property - 3 Wood Farm Barns in Gospel End Road - is within easy reach of Bagderidge Country Park, Sedgley Golf Club and Penn Common.

The accommodation has been converted to a contemporary style which includes oak flooring, open-tread staircase, hardwood double glazing and gas central heating which includes under-floor heating throughout the ground floor.

The home is entered through double doors to an impressive dining hall with access to a boiler cupboard and further double doors to the rear and guest cloakroom.

Spacious

Leading off the hall is a spacious sitting room while the fitted breakfast kitchen has cream fronted units with contrasting drawers and integrated appliances including twin Bosch electric ovens, gas hob, fridge, freezer and dishwasher.

The winding oak staircase from the hall leads to a large landing with study area and large arch top windows to the front and rear with a master bedroom suite with en suite shower room, further double bedroom and luxury family bathroom, and on the second floor are two more double bedrooms and a shower room.

Outside the property is approached along a half-mile shared road leading to a private block paved drive providing ample parking with adjacent lawn area, with the rear garden having a block paved patio area with lawn beyond.

Planning permission is also being sought to convert the stables opposite to provide double garaging for both number 2 and 3 Wood Farm Barns.

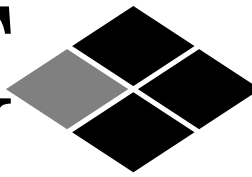
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8 Sunset Close, Great Wyrley	11.15 am	11.15 am
13 Jacobs Hall Lane, Great Wyrley	11.45 am	11.45 am
200 Churchill Road, Bentley	12.45 pm	12.45 pm
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When viewing properties please take care when parking so as not to inconvenience adjoining owners and road users.

All measurements given are approximate and for guidance purposes only. Successful purchasers will be required to provide proof of identity and address.

LOT 1 **GUIDE PRICE: £65,000-£75,000**



106 WALSALL ROAD, CANNOCK
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi-detached house
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ Part gas fired central heating
- ◆ In need of renovation/improvement

LOT 2 **GUIDE PRICE: £80,000-£85,000**



162 MARSH LANE, WOLVERHAMPTON
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Inter war semi-detached house
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ Gas central heating
- ◆ Predominantly double glazed
- ◆ In need of modernisation

LOT 3 **GUIDE PRICE: £80,000**



FLATS 1 & 2, 10 CROSS STREET, BRIDGTOWN
FREEHOLD INVESTMENT

- ◆ Two - one bedroomed flats
- ◆ Gas central heating
- ◆ Fully double glazed
- ◆ Currently let producing \$8,820 per annum

LOT 4 **GUIDE PRICE: £50,000-£60,000**



200 CHURCHILL ROAD, BENTLEY, WALSALL
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi detached house
- ◆ Two bedrooms
- ◆ In need of comprehensive refurbishment

LOT 5 **GUIDE PRICE: £90,000-£100,000**



8 SUNSET CLOSE, GREAT WYRLEY
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Linked detached bungalow
- ◆ In need of some improvement
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ Gas fired central heating
- ◆ Fully double glazed

LOT 6 **GUIDE PRICE: £100,000-£120,000**

BUILDING LAND

LAND TO REAR OF: 91 OLD FALLOW ROAD, CANNOCK
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Residential building land with the benefit of planning permission for residential development for two detached residences with private drive access
- ◆ Located in popular residential area
- ◆ Width on building line - 22m approx.
- ◆ Depth of main plot - 32m approx. (average approx.)
- ◆ Area - 915 m sq (1088 yds sq) or thereabouts

LOT 7 **GUIDE PRICE: £50,000**



114 COPPICE ROAD, RUGELEY
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Inner terraced house
- ◆ Three bedrooms
- ◆ Front and rear gardens
- ◆ Requiring refurbishment

LOT 8 **GUIDE PRICE: £125,000**



EDWARD STREET CLUB, EDWARD STREET, CHADSMOOR
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Substantial brick built premises standing on a large corner plot. Suitable for:
- ◆ Investment
- ◆ Re-development opportunity
- ◆ Owner occupation
- ◆ Total site area - 0.392 acre or thereabouts

LOT 9 **GUIDE PRICE: £100,000**



INDIVIDUAL BUILDING PLOT ADJOINING TOPEKA, HOLLY LANE, CHESLYN HAY
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Individual building plot with outline planning permission for residential development
- ◆ Located in popular residential area
- ◆ Width - 12m (approx.) on building line
- ◆ Depth - 47m (approx.) maximum

LOT 10 **GUIDE PRICE: £90,000-£100,000**



13 JACOBS HALL LANE, GREAT WYRLEY
FREEHOLD WITH VACANT POSSESSION

- ◆ Semi-detached house
- ◆ Two bedrooms
- ◆ Gas central heating
- ◆ Predominantly double glazed
- ◆ In need of modernisation



RICS

01543 505454

19 Wolverhampton Road, Cannock, Staffordshire. WS11 1DG

Quality links between landlords and tenants



URBAN LINK

SPECIALIST LETTING AGENTS

NEW £550pcm Chesterton Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A traditional 3bed semi detached ● 1 spacious reception room ● Modern fitted kitchen/diner with cooker ● Pleasant upstairs family bathroom ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Fully enclosed rear garden and Dss accepted 	NEW £550 pcm Shortlands Lane <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A traditional 3 bed semi detached ● Spacious living room ● Good size modern kitchen / diner ● Pleasant upstairs family bathroom ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● Enclosed rear garden and driveway 	NEW £550 pcm Honeybourne Way, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A superb 3bed semi detached property ● A spacious lounge with feature fireplace ● A modern fitted kitchen with cooker & hob ● A pleasant upstairs family bathroom ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Fully enclosed rear garden & Parking 	NEW £500 pcm Bloxwich Road, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A superb 3bed mid terrace ● 2 Spacious reception rooms ● New fitted kitchen with cooker ● Pleasant downstairs bathroom with shower ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Enclosed rear garden, Dss accepted 	NEW £495 pcm Pendlebury Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Brand new 2bed 2nd floor apartment ● 1 Spacious reception room ● Fully fitted modern kitchen with cooker ● A good size pleasant bathroom ● Gas central heating and upvc double glazing ● Allocated parking, washing machine 	NEW £495 pcm Pendlebury Close <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ Brand new 2bed ground floor apartment ★ 1 Spacious reception room ★ Fully fitted modern kitchen with cooker ★ A good size pleasant bathroom ★ Gas central heating and upvc double glazing ★ Allocated parking, washing machine
NEW £475 pcm Dora Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3 bed mid terrace property ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Modern fitted kitchen ● A pleasant downstairs family bathroom ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted, Enclosed rear garden 	NEW £475 pcm Queen Mary Street, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A superb 2bed mid terrace ● 2 Spacious reception rooms ● A modern fitted kitchen ● Downstairs family bathroom ● Gas central heating and Double Glazing ● Rear garden and dss accepted 	NEW £425 pcm Bradford Street, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A spectacular 1bed refurbished flat ● A spacious lounge area ● Brand new fitted kitchen with cooker ● A pleasant modern bathroom with shower ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Town centre location 	NEW £425pcm Stafford Street, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 2bed 1st floor apartment ● A spacious reception room ● A fitted kitchen with cooker ● Shower room with separate WC ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Dss accepted, optional furnished 	NEW £395pcm Thornbury Road, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A modern 1bed 1st floor apartment ● 1 Spacious reception room ● A modern fitted kitchen with cooker and hob ● Pleasant family bathroom with shower over bath ● Electric heating and Double glazing ● Allocated parking space and Stair cupboard 	NEW £375pcm Bradford Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A spectacular refurbished studio apartment ● A spacious lounge/bedroom area ● Brand new fitted kitchen with cooker ● A pleasant modern bathroom with shower ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Town centre location
NEW £350 pcm Stafford Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 1bed refurbished apartment ● A spacious lounge area ● Fully fitted kitchen with cooker and fridge ● A pleasant bathroom with shower over bath ● Electric heating and Double glazing ● Dss Accepted, located in willenhall town center 	NEW £350 pcm Paddock Lane <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Re-furnished 1 bed apartment ● 1 reception room ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● New downstairs bathroom with shower ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	NEW £350 pcm Tudor House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A Superb 1 bed 2nd floor apartment ● Spacious lounge ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Family bathroom with shower over bath ● Electric Heating and Double Glazing ● Modern Decor throughout 	NEW £300 pcm Market Place <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A re-furnished studio apartment ● Open planned kitchen and living area ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Good size bathroom with shower cubicle ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	£675 pcm Mellish Park <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A luxury 2 bed ground floor apartment ● Open planned lounge/kitchen ● Modern kitchen with integral appliances ● Designer bathroom and en-suite ● Double Glazing throughout ● Allocated secure parking 	£650 pcm The Crescent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A superb 4bed semi detached ● 2 Spacious reception rooms ● Traditional kitchen with cooker ● Upstairs family bathroom with shower ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Driveway for 2 cars and utility area
£545 pcm Delves Crescent <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A splendid 3 bed semi detached ● 1 spacious through lounge ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Upstairs family bathroom ● Utility, Guest WC and integral garage ● Enclosed rear garden and driveway 	£525pcm Chuckery Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ★ A superb 3bed end terrace house ★ A spacious double lounge ★ A modern fitted kitchen with cooker ★ A pleasant family bathroom ★ Gas central heating and Double glazing ★ Fully enclosed rear garden, Dss accepted 	£495 pcm Wenlock Gardens <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3bed semi detached property ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● A good size modern fitted kitchen ● A pleasant upstairs family bathroom ● Gas central heating throughout ● Dss accepted with a guarantor 	£525 pcm Bath Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A traditional 3 bed mid terrace ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Good size bathroom with shower ● Downstairs family bathroom ● Superb bathroom with shower over bath ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	£495 pcm Abbey Square, Bloxwich <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3 bed mid terrace property ● 1 spacious reception room ● Fitted family kitchen/diner ● Upstairs bathroom with separate WC ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	£475 pcm Scarborough Road <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A recently re-furnished 2 bed mid terrace ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Upstairs bathroom with separate shower ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted
£450 pcm Kingsley Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A traditional 2 bed mid terrace property ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● Upstairs bathroom with separate shower ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	£450 pcm Dora Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3 bed mid terrace property ● Spacious through lounge ● Modern fitted kitchen ● Downstairs family bathroom ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted 	£450 pcm Florence Street <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A 3 bed mid terrace property ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Modern fitted kitchen with cooker ● A pleasant downstairs family bathroom ● Gas Central Heating and Double Glazing ● DSS accepted, Enclosed rear garden 	£425 pcm Broadstone Avenue, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A re-furnished 1bed 1st floor apartment ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Good size open planned lounge/kitchen ● New fitted kitchen with cooker ● Superb bathroom with shower over bath ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Neutral decor and laminate flooring 	£400 pcm Broadstone Avenue, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● A re-furnished 1bed 1st floor apartment ● A superb open planned lounge/kitchen ● New fitted kitchen with cooker ● Bathroom with shower over bath ● Gas central heating and Double glazing ● Neutral decor and laminate flooring 	£400 pcm Laburnham House <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● One bed ground floor apartment ● 2 spacious reception rooms ● Good sized kitchen with cooker ● Family bathroom with shower over bath ● Gas central heating and double glazing ● Neutral decor throughout



**7 Queens Parade
Bloxwich
Walsall
WS3 2EX
01922 711444**

Have you
seen the new
Goodchilds Mini?



**Walsall
Belgrave Walk**
● Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
● Two Reception Rooms
● Fitted Kitchen●Front & Rear Gardens
● D.Glazing & G.C.Heating●Garage
● DHSS Accepted●No Pets or Smokers

£550 PCM



**Walsall
Trees Road**
● Three Bedroom Semi-Detached
● Lounge●Kitchen●Large Conservatory
● Family Bathroom●Double Glazing
● Gas Central Heating●Front & Rear Gardens

£550 PCM



**Bloxwich
Selsdon Road**
● Two Bedroom End of Terrace
● Lounge●Kitchen●Conservatory
● Bathroom●D.Glazing & Gas C.Heating
● Block Paved Drive●Gardens
● Sorry No DHSS, Pets or Smokers

£550 PCM



**Walsall
Lumley Road**
● Three Bedroom Terraced Property
● Part Furnished●Two Reception Rooms
● Fitted Kitchen●Downstairs Bathroom
● Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing
● Rear Garden●DHSS Accepted

£525 PCM



**Bloxwich
Cleeve Way**
● Three Bedroom Terrace
● Refurbished●Lounge●Fitted Kitchen
● Family Bathroom with Shower over bath
● D.Glazing & Central Heating●Parking
● Rear Garden●DHSS Accepted

£525 PCM



**Bloxwich
Stuart Street**
● Three Bedroom End-Terrace
● Two Reception Rooms
● Kitchen●Bathroom●Separate W.C.
● Front & Rear Gardens●Central Heating
● DHSS Accepted, No Pets or Smokers

£500 PCM



**Bloxwich
Tintern Crescent**
● Three Bedroom End Terrace
● Lounge●Kitchen●Diner
● Family Bathroom●Rear Garden
● Front Garden with Off Road Parking
● D.Glazing●Heating●DHSS Accepted

£495 PCM



**Walsall
Waverley Road**
● Three Bedroom Terrace
● One Reception room
● Fitted Kitchen●Family Bathroom
● Gas Central Heating●Garage
● Off Road Parking
● DHSS Accepted

£495 PCM



**Walsall
Jane Lane Close**
● Three Bedroom Mid-Terrace
● Lounge●Kitchen●Diner
● Family Bathroom●Rear Garden
● Gas Central Heating●Front Garden
● Off Road Parking●DHSS Accepted

£495 PCM



**Bloxwich
Astbury Close**
● Two Bedroom Terrace
● Lounge●Fitted Kitchen
● Family Bathroom●Gas Central Heating
● Double Glazing●Front & Rear Gardens
● Garage●Sorry No DHSS or Pets

£495 PCM



**Pelsall
Windrush Close**
● Two Bedroom Top Floor Apartment
● Furnished●Fitted Kitchen
● Bathroom with Shower over Bath
● Double Glazing & Central Heating
● Garage●Sorry No DHSS or Pets

£495 PCM



**Bloxwich
Somerfield Road**
● Three Bedroom Terrace
● Lounge●Kitchen●Downstairs W.C.
● Bathroom with separate shower cubicle
● Part Double Glazing●Gas Central Heating
● Gardens●O.R.Parking●DHSS Accepted

£495 PCM



**Walsall
Tanners Court**
● Two bedroom apartments
● Lounge●Kitchen
● Bathroom
● Master Bedroom with Ensuite
● Sorry No DHSS

From £475 PCM



**Walsall
Melish Court**
● Two Bedroom Top Floor Flat
● Lounge with Laminate Flooring
● Kitchen●Bathroom●Garage
● Allocated Parking Space
● Sorry No DHSS

£475 PCM



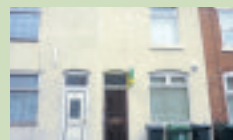
**Walsall
Kenilworth Crescent**
● Two Bedroom End Terrace
● Double Glazing
● Gas Central Heating
● Front and Rear Gardens
● Off Road Parking●Sorry No DHSS

£475 PCM



**Bloxwich
Nursery Road**
● Two Bedroom Semi-Detached
● Lounge●Kitchen●Bathroom
● Downstairs W.C.
● D.Glazing & C-Heating
● Front & Rear Gardens●DHSS Accepted

£475 PCM



**Bloxwich
Green Lane**
● Two Bedroom Mid-Terrace
● Two Reception Rooms
● Brand New Kitchen●New Bathroom
● Rear Garden●DHSS Accepted
● Gas Central Heating & Double Glazing

£475 PCM



**Willenhall
Kingfisher Court**
● Two Bedroom Ground Floor Apartment
● Secure Entrance Gates●Lounge
● Modern Kitchen●Bathroom
● Allocated Parking●Gas Central Heating
● Double Glazing●SORRY NO DHSS

£475 PCM



**Walsall
Smiths Flour Mill**
● One Bedroom Apartment
● Lounge●Kitchen●Bathroom
● Electric Heating●D.Glazing
● Off Road Parking●Secure Entrance
● Sorry no DHSS●Close to Walsall Town

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Gurney Road**
● Two Bedroom End Terrace
● Lounge●Kitchen
● Bathroom
● Downstairs W.C●Garden
● Garage●DHSS Accepted

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Spring Court, Birmingham Road**
● Two Bedroom Ground Floor Flat
● Lounge●Shower Room
● Fitted Kitchen
● Private Parking
● Shared Gardens●Garage

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Rowland Street**
● Two Bedroom Mid-Terrace
● Lounge●Dining Room●Kitchen
● Ground Floor Shower Room
● Rear Garden●Gas Central Heating
● DHSS Accepted

£450 PCM



**Bloxwich
Millfield Avenue**
● Two Bedroom Flat
● Lounge●Kitchen●Bathroom
● Separate W.C.
● Gas Central Heating
● Communal Grounds

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Cornwall Place**
● Two Bedroom First Floor Flat
● Large Lounge/Dining Room
● Kitchen●Family Bathroom●Side Garden
● Double Glazing & Gas Central Heating
● Sorry NO DHSS, Pets or Smokers

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Lime Street**
● Two Bedroom Mid-Terrace
● Two Reception Rooms
● Fitted Kitchen●Family Bathroom
● Rear Garden●Double Glazing
● Gas Central Heating●Sorry NO DHSS

£450 PCM



**Walsall
Deermead Court**
● Two Bedroom Ground Floor Apartment
● Open Plan Lounge/Kitchen
● En-Suite Shower Room●Bathroom
● Gas Central Heating●Double Glazing
● Allocated Parking●Sorry No DHSS

£440 PCM



**Bloxwich
Foster Street**
● Two Bedroom Terrace
● Two Reception Rooms
● Double Glazing●Gas Central Heating
● Fitted Kitchen
● DHSS Accepted

£425 PCM



**Walsall
Waterfront Way**
● One Bedroom Apartment
● Lounge●Fitted Kitchen
● Electric Heating
● Double Glazing
● Sorry no DHSS

£400 PCM



**Bloxwich
Harrison Street**
● Two Bedroom Flats
● Lounge●Fitted Kitchen
● Double Glazing
● Electric heating
● DHSS Accepted

£400PCM



**Walsall
Cairns Street**
● Two Bed Refurbished Property
● Through Lounge
● Fitted Kitchen
● Bathroom
● DHSS Accepted

£400 PCM



**Walsall
Cairns Street**
● Two Bedroom Terrace
● Being Refurbished throughout
● Kitchen●Family Bathroom
● Double Glazing●Gas Central Heating
● Rear Garden●DHSS Accepted

£400 PCM



**Bloxwich
High Street**
● One Bedroom Flat
● Large Lounge●Kitchen
● Large Bathroom●Double Glazing
● Electric Heating●Off Road Parking
● DHSS Accepted

£400 PCM



**Bloxwich
Foster Street**
● Two Bedroom Terrace
● Two Reception Rooms
● Family Bathroom●Gas Central Heating
● Double Glazing●Rear Garden
● DHSS Accepted

£400 PCM



**Walsall
Hillary Street**
● First Floor Two Bedroom Flat
● Lounge
● Fitted Kitchen
● Family Bathroom
● DHSS Accepted

£390 PCM



**Bloxwich
Field Road**
● One Bedroom Flat
● Kitchen●Bathroom
● Central Heating
● Double Glazing
● Sorry No DHSS

£375 PCM



**Willenhall
Market Place**
● One Bedroom
● Lounge●Modern Fitted Kitchen
● Modern Bathroom
● Gas Central Heating
● DHSS Accepted

£375 PCM

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Willenhall SKITTS ESTATE AGENTS

01902 631151
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FEATURED PROPERTY



**Essington
Larchmore Drive**

- Modern Style Detached Family Residence • Popular Location
- Lounge • Dining Room • Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms • Bathroom
- Gas CH • Double Glazing • Garage • Driveway
- Rear Gardens • Energy Rating 'D'

£229,950

MANAGER'S CHOICE



**Coppice Farm
Nevis Grove**

- Impressive Detached Property • Lounge & Dining Room
- Conservatory • Spacious Breakfast Kitchen • Guests WC
- Four Bedrooms • En-Suite • Re-Fitted Family Bathroom
- Garage & Driveway • Rear Gardens
- Double Glazing • Gas Central Heating • Energy Rating TBC

£205,000

PROPERTY OF THE WEEK



**Essington
Upper Sneyd Road**

- Much Improved Modern Style Detached Property • No Chain
- Lounge • Superb Spacious Dining Kitchen • Conservatory
- Three Bedrooms • Re-Fitted Bathroom
- Double Glazing • Gas C/Heating • Off Road Parking
- Rear Garden • Energy Rating 'D'

£185,000

FREE MARKET APPRAISALS - Call us now on 01902 631151

NEW

**BENTLEY, WALSALL
WOLVENHAMPTON ROAD WEST**

- Individually designed detached bungalow
- Three excellent bedrooms • Lounge & dining kitchen
- Part double glazing • Gas central heating • 40ft garage
- No chain • Viewing recommended
- Energy Rating 'D'

£250,000

NEW

**Summer Hayes
Stirling Crescent**

- Extended Semi Detached Bungalow • No Chain
- Spacious Through Lounge / Dining Room
- Re-Fitted Kitchen • 2 Bedrooms • Bathroom
- Garage & Driveway • Rear Gardens • Energy Rating 'E'
- Double Glazing • Gas Central Heating System

£150,000

NEW

**Summer Hayes
Edinburgh Drive**

- Superb Well Presented Semi Detached Bungalow • Pleasant Location
- Lounge • Dining Room • Re-Fitted Kitchen
- Two Bedrooms • Re-Fitted Bathroom
- Gas CH • Double Glazing • Energy Rating 'F'
- Garage • Driveway • Rear Gardens

£142,500

NEW

**Portobello
Burford Close (Off Millchipp Road)**

- Newly Built Detached Bungalow • Brand New Development
- Lounge • Breakfast Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms • Bathroom
- Gas CH • Double Glazing
- Off Road Parking • Gardens • Energy Rating TBC

£135,000

NEW

**Hadley Heath
Hawthorn Drive**

- Extended Modern Style Semi Detached • Rear Gardens
- Lounge • Re-Fitted Kitchen
- Ground Floor Bedroom • Wet Room
- Two Further Bedrooms • Bathroom • Energy Rating TBC
- Gas Central Heating • Part Double Glazing • Driveway

£127,000

NEW

**WILLENHALL
HALEY STREET**

- Traditional style mid terrace property
- Three bedrooms • Lounge • Refitted dining kitchen
- Ground floor shower room • En-suite wc
- Utility • Part double glazing • Part gas c/heating
- Driveway • Rear garden • Energy Rating 'Bc'

£90,000

NEW

**SHORT HEATH
POOLES LANE**

- Brand new 4 bedroom modern detached residence
- Lounge/dining room • Conservatory
- Well appointed breakfast kitchen • Bathroom & en-suite
- Gas central heating • UPVC double glazing
- Garage and driveway • PART EXCHANGE AVAILABLE

£209,950

BACK ON

**COPPICE FARM
KINGFISHER GROVE**

- Pleasantly appointed modern style detached property
- Three bedrooms, en-suite shower room • Lounge & dining rooms
- UPVC double glazed conservatory • Fitted kitchen & utility rooms
- Refitted bathroom with shower • Enclosed rear garden
- Gas central heating • Double glazed windows • Energy rating 'D'

£179,950

NEW

**NEW INVENTION, WILLENHALL
ESSINGTON ROAD**

- Brand new development of two detached bungalows
- Spacious living room & dining area • Fitted kitchen
- Two bedrooms • Double glazing • Gas CH • Energy Rating TBC
- Detached garage in separate block • Enclosed rear garden
- Viewing essential or appointment • Part Exchange Considered

FROM £159,950

REDUCED

**COPPICE FARM
GRAZEWOOD CLOSE**

- Extended modern style detached residence
- Three large double bedrooms • Lounge
- Refitted dining kitchen • Family bathroom
- Double glazing • Gas central heating • Garage & driveway
- Utility • Rear garden • Energy Rating 'C'

£162,950

NO CHAIN

**WILLENHALL
OVERDALE DRIVE**

- Spacious detached bungalow • Popular location
- Large through lounge/dining room • Kitchen
- Two bedrooms • Bathroom
- Front & rear gardens • Garage, drive & carport
- No chain • Energy rating 'D'

£155,000

REDUCED

**WILLENHALL
HONEYBOURNE WAY**

- Superb much improved modern style semi detached
- Lounge • Conservatory • Re-fitted kitchen • Popular location
- Three bedrooms • Re-fitted luxury bedrooms
- Gas central heating • Double glazing • Pleasant gardens
- Garage • Driveway • Energy rating 'C'

£139,995

NO CHAIN

**Hadley Heath
Hawthorn Drive**

- Extended Modern Style Semi Detached • No Chain
- Lounge, Dining Room • Re-Fitted Kitchen
- Three Bedrooms • Bathroom
- Gas C/Heating • D/Driveway
- Gardens • Energy Rating 'D'

£127,500

REDUCED

**WILLENHALL
BARMOUTH CLOSE**

- Pleasant semi detached property
- Three bedrooms
- Gas CH • Double Glazing
- Re-fitted Kitchen
- Spacious bathroom • Front and rear gardens • Energy 'D'

Offers In Excess Of £110,000

NO CHAIN

**WILLENHALL
SQUIRES GROVE**

- Superb Coach House apartment
- Lounge with dining area • Impressive kitchen
- Two excellent size bedrooms • Bathroom • Gas central heating
- Double glazing • Gym/office/converted garage • Parking
- Energy Rating 'C'

£110,500 NO CHAIN

EXTENDED

**WILLENHALL
HILL ROAD**

- Much improved extended three bedroom property
- Lounge and extended dining room • Fitted breakfast kitchen
- Bathroom with shower • Garage and block paved driveway
- Gas central heating • UPVC double glazed windows
- Viewing recommended • Energy Rating 'C'

NOW £105,000

NEW

**NEW INVENTION
ESSINGTON ROAD**

- Much improved semi detached property
- Two double bedrooms • Large lounge • Spacious dining kitchen
- Luxury bathroom • Box room/study • Double glazing
- Gas central heating • Very large rear gardens
- Driveway • Energy Rating 'D'

NEW PRICE £94,950 NO CHAIN

NO CHAIN

**WILLENHALL
RECENT STREET**

- Period End Terrace
- 2 Reception • Energy Rating 'F'
- Kitchen & utility • Two bedrooms, one with attic area
- Bathroom • Rear garden
- Double glazing, Gas CH

NOW £85,000 NO CHAIN

WILLENHALL

- Superb Modern detached residence • Four bedrooms
- Two receptions • Breakfast kitchen • Gas CH • Double glaz
- 2 en-suites • Bathroom • Garden • Garage • Energy 'D'

£250,000

WILLENHALL

- Superb end terrace • Spacious lounge • Dining kitchen
- Three bedrooms • Double glazing • Gas central heating
- Garage, driveway • Viewing recommended • Energy 'C'

£134,995 NO CHAIN

WILLENHALL

- Much Improved Period Mid Terrace • Three Bedrooms
- 2 Receptions • Newly Fitted Kitchen • Re Fitted Bathroom
- Double Glazing and Gas CH • No Chain • Energy 'D'

£89,950

SHORT HEATH

- Superb detached property • 3 bedrooms • Energy C
- Spacious lounge • Dining kitchen • Luxury Bathroom
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Motoring

Compiled by Motoring
Editor Sharon Walters

No time for a siesta in this Fiesta

By Ian Donaldson

PICTURE the scene; ahead of you is a ribbon of road stretching to the far horizon with tempting corners and nobody else about. Do you take the 'dream' Lamborghini or Ford's new zesty Fiesta?



Ford's new Fiesta ST which is certain to go down a storm with UK buyers

The Lambo, of course. Or perhaps not. The road is rather narrow and there are enough nasty surfaces (the odd pothole too) to make the Italian rocket feel big and a bit fragile.

So you don your sensible hat and jump into the Fiesta ST, latest in a line of entertaining small Fords that started with the XR2 in 1981 and soon became the nation's favourite hot hatch.

Nothing much is likely to change 32 years later, with the UK set to take 5,000 ST Fiestas annually, around half of European sales overall. Yes, we still love a quick, affordable

Ford.

And affordable the new baby with attitude really is.

There are two versions, the plainly titled ST at £16,795 and the better equipped ST2 at £17,795, both of them clearly undercutting obvious rivals from the likes of Renault and (soon) Peugeot.

Powering the ST is a potent 182 horsepower, 1.6 litre turbo petrol engine that promises decent economy when you're not enjoying that sinuous snake of Tarmac mentioned above.

But what marks the newcomer out isn't its outright performance, but the compelling way it refuses to turn into a springless skateboard when the road turns from billiard table smooth to B-road brittle.

Engineering

It's a genuine engineering achievement to produce a car that's so much fun, practically wherever you happen to be.

The Lamborghini, on the other hand, will turn all pouty at the first sign of a speedbump, never mind a width restrictor or the crawl to work in the morning.

On paper, there's nothing magic about the ST.

It could be one of many small hatches designed to add a dash of spice to everyday driving. What sets the car apart (and Ford has form in this department) is the obvious attention to the smallest detail that other car makers give up on sooner.

You can't tell by looking, you have to take a Fiesta ST for a longish drive, where the supple but sporty suspension, perfectly weighted



The Fiesta ST interior may look old hat but is packed with good quality fittings

steering and brakes that practically start a conversation with your right foot will have you wanting more.

What you can tell by looking is that the ST stands out from its softer siblings, thanks to a bold honeycomb radiator grille, large rear spoiler and twin exhausts.

There are big alloy wheels, tinted glass and a slightly lower stance too. Inside, you'll find grippy front seats in cloth as the main marker that here is a car designed to corner quickly.

A heated windscreen (which is just magic on those frosty mornings) and a DAB radio are

standard too. Pay your extra £1,000 for an ST2 and you add heated and part leather seats, a better sound system, darkened glass for rear seat passengers and a button to start the engine, with the key left in your pocket.

Both versions share a dashboard that was clearly inspired by mobile phones but looks a bit old hat and cluttered, but there's no denying the quality of everything you can see and touch. And you certainly won't be trying to tune the radio when you're having so much fun producing a different sort of music from beneath the bonnet.

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Motoring



Volkswagen has developed a number of engine types, each to suit a different type of driving

Prices look set to rocket

FIRST, the good news. Within a year or two, you'll be able to buy ordinary cars with all kinds of drivetrains designed to fit exact day-to-day needs and driving styles.

The chief undercurrent at this year's Geneva Motor Show was that of drivetrain expansion, where normal, everyday and production-ready cars are now powered not just by petrol, diesel and electricity but myriad combinations of the three, plus natural gas, hydrogen and even human faeces.

And herein lies the bad news. In the quest for every last mile per gallon, billions of pounds are being spent, and because the drivetrain solutions are so varied and technical (just look at how complex even ordinary internal combustion engines have become), the likely production runs will have to be smaller to accommodate the variety.

That means prices are going to rocket, again.

Back in 2005, the Volkswagen Golf GTi, arguably the finest all-round car there was, went on sale for less than

£20,000. When the 2013 model arrives it could cost almost £30,000 as a five-door, depending on how sterling does against the euro, and that near-50 per cent increase is for a normal car in just eight years.

But Volkswagen has also developed petrol-electric hybrids, diesel-electric hybrids, plug-in hybrids, range-extender hybrids, electric-only drivetrains, natural gas-burning techniques and more besides.

Different

Each will suit a different kind of driving, and if people buy the right one for them it means that sales will be spread across many different and independently expensive propulsion systems.

Production volumes will be comparatively low for each, and prices therefore have to be higher to recoup the development costs.

What's the point of saving £25 per thousand miles when your car is costing £100 more every month just to own? It's complete nonsense and ultimately self-destructive for the industry.

Recent surveys have shown that young Europeans, especially those in cities, are turning away from car ownership altogether because it's just too expensive.

Neat, modern car rental systems like Zipcar give them the chance to forget car ownership but still drive if they need to, and if that trend keeps expanding then car manufacturers are going to fall victim to a colossal global crash that will see hundreds of thousands of jobs axed, national economies crippled and the only remaining car brand as Dacia.

It's simple economics and the European Parliament is mostly to blame. By forcing manufacturers to reduce CO2 so quickly, they're actually forcing prices skywards as the task gets harder and harder.

And all the time fewer and fewer people will actually want, or be able, to pay for a car.

The car industry is in danger of biting off more than it can chew. It's time for Europe to recognise the need to keep car prices down for its own good.

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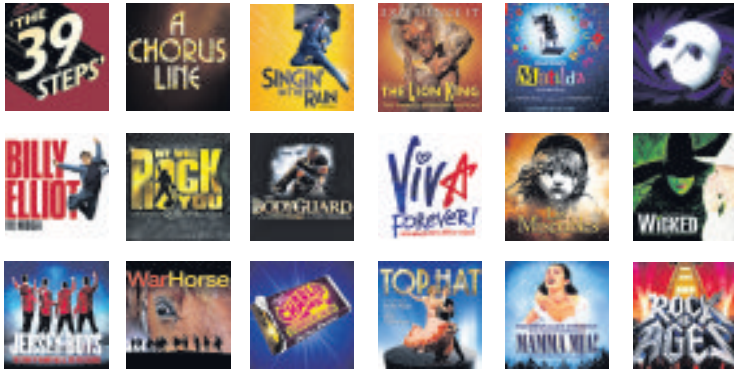
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Craig Westcarr celebrates his second goal on a day of dejection for keeper Joe Murphy



Sam Mantom is at full stretch for Walsall in their 4-0 demolition of Coventry City

Super Saddlers find the belief to succeed

Walsall 4 Coventry 0

NOW it's all about belief.

As Walsall routed Coventry on Easter Monday a banner hung in the stadium which was originally inspired during the Great Escape two years ago, *writes Nick Mashiter.*

It epitomises the feeling within the club, from fans, management and players. That emotion which has taken them to sit three points shy of the League One play-offs with four games left.

The banner read 'Believe' and that is what the Saddlers must do.

Belief itself has been in short supply during the last five seasons.

It was there during the final months in 2010-11 as Walsall survived against the odds, returned last year to aid the Saddlers' relegation fight and now it is back to inspire for different reasons.

Generally, though, the majority of fans have lacked belief their club could progress following years in the shadows until this season.

And, when Jamie Paterson – a boyhood Sky Blues fan – stroked in the fourth goal of a derby demolition, that belief continued to seep into every Walsall pore.

More than 5,000 Saddlers fans – in a season-high crowd of 7,504 – believed.

A little under five months ago Walsall were 19th and three points above the drop zone after being hammered 5-1 at Coventry.

It was a defeat which rankled with the team, due to the dubious nature of some Coventry goals.

How times change. Now they go into Saturday's crunch clash with fourth-placed Sheffield United holding not just faint, but viable, play-off hopes.

Dean Smith and his troops dismissed the idea of a 'must-win game' but victory is paramount to catch the leading pack.

Walsall remain outsiders – like they always have been – but having just clinically dispatched a former promotion rival to



Joy for scorer Craig Westcarr, second left



Walsall's Jamie Paterson opens the scoring as the Saddlers step up their play-off bid

extend their unbeaten run to 12 games, who would bet against them? They may miss out; those 13 agonising winless League One games earlier could haunt them, but even if they do Dean Smith and his band of kids and travellers have worked wonders.

They have restored that belief, brought the club back to the people and repaired some serious cracks of the past.

The season has been a success, play-offs or not, and the building blocks are already ready for next year's assault.

Compare Walsall with Coventry and the Cyprus government will be on the phone begging the prudent Saddlers to resolve their cash crisis.

The Sky Blues are in disarray off the pitch but still needed to be dispatched on it. They are no mugs and, aside from the opening of the second half, Walsall clinically, confidently and coolly destroyed them.

Coventry were masters of their own downfall in the second half after Jordan Stewart's red card, but by then Walsall had already gone for the kill. They cruised through without 19-goal striker Will Grigg, sidelined with hamstring trouble.

Craig Westcarr bagged the goals which his efforts so richly deserved and Paterson's classy double – against the side he supports – answered any doubts over whether they could cope without Grigg.

James Baxendale was recalled for Grigg to leave Westcarr as the sole frontman and the striker flashed an early effort wide before Joe Murphy parried Andy Taylor's drive, although the Saddlers were forced to wait until the 33rd minute for the opener.

It came from a predictable source as Coventry-born Paterson skipped round two challenges to slide the ball in from six yards. Callum Ball prodded wide after Sam John-

stone saved from Carl Baker just before the break as Coventry briefly threatened.

Manchester United loanee Johnstone, commanding and confident, then turned Baker's header over immediately after the restart. But that was the last scare as Walsall doubled the lead on 54 minutes through Westcarr's penalty after Baxendale was brought down by hapless Aaron Martin.

Stewart walked after his second yellow for taking out the flying Febian Brandy and the visitors imploded. They lost their heads and when Paterson's free-kick was beaten out by Murphy, Westcarr netted the simplest of headers with 16 minutes remaining.

Paterson completed the rout with a cool finish into the bottom corner three minutes from time after Westcarr broke clear. Revenge over rivals and promotion possible.

It's the belief which kills you, but it also gives you hope.

An opportunity missed by both as the scoreline takes blank look

THE result that both teams feared but neither wanted came to pass at Huish Park last Friday as League One's two promotion outsiders cancelled each other out in a goalless draw of precious few chances, *writes Steve Madeley.*

If Dean Smith's side miss out on the post-season party by a point or two, this might well be one of the games they rue the most.

Two hard-fought away points would, at most stages of the season, have represented a solid return for a team who, not so long ago, were staring at a relegation battle.

But, having hauled themselves from near the foot of the table and mounted the unlikely of promotion charges, Smith and co know they cannot draw their way into the play-offs.

They took a gamble by pressing leading scorer Will Grigg back into action less than a fortnight after he suffered a hamstring injury that still required heavy strapping. He worked hard but looked well short of his pre-injury sharpness.

His continued recovery could be crucial in the weeks ahead, as could the ability of widemen Jamie Paterson and Febian Brandy to turn the decent positions they found in Somerset into genuine goalscoring opportunities.

Purpose

For 20 minutes at the start of the second half, Walsall's force of purpose was such that a goal seemed inevitable. But only once did they force home keeper Marek Stech to save his side.

The Saddlers started brightly enough with Craig Westcarr delivering an inviting right-wing cross that just eluded several team-mates. And Paterson showed positive intent by skipping past full-back Luke Ayling on 10 minutes but he floated his cross into the hands of the grateful keeper.

Moments later Stech flung himself to his right to palm away a stinging drive by Brandy.

Smith's men survived something of a scare on 25 minutes when a neat Yeovil move sent James Hayter galloping down the left flank.

He had leading scorer Paddy Madden waiting unattended, but his pass was poor and Paul Downing was able to tidy up for the visitors.

There was a further worry for the Saddlers when young keeper Sam Johnstone failed to gather a left-wing cross by Angelo Balanta, but captain Andy Butler was on hand to head clear.

The Saddlers started the second half from the front foot

Yeovil 0 Walsall 0



Andy Butler clears for Walsall at Yeovil

and they went close several times. First a jinking run down the right by Brandy ended with a cross that narrowly evaded Adam Chambers in the box.

Then a neat move down the Saddlers left saw Paterson with a chance to shoot but the difficult pitch took the ball away from him.

Yeovil screamed for a penalty when Hayter went down under a challenge from Downing but referee Tim Robinson was not interested.

Yeovil threatened briefly when Balanta found himself in space on the left and fired in a cross-shot that had the home crowd excited, but it flew past the far post.

There was more concern moments later when the home side worked the ball to Madden, but Andy Taylor made a saving challenge.

As Yeovil worked their way into the game, centre-back Byron Webster headed just wide, but the Saddlers continued to attack with purpose and, from a left-wing corner, a snap-shot from Grigg was tipped over.

That was as close as either side went as both camps were left to reflect on an opportunity missed.

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SPORT

Happy Easter
Four points so sweet
as Saddlers crack on
Page 47



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Keeper's Faultless as final looming

**Southern United 0
Walsall Wood 3**

WALSALL WOOD planted one foot firmly in the final of the Les James Challenge Cup after this comprehensive first-leg semi-final victory.

It wasn't a vintage Wood performance in the first half but after the break they came out a different team.

The efforts of Wood keeper Dale Faultless helped keep the first half goalless.

He did well on 15 minutes to make a brace block as Chris Murphy collected a ball on the left of the box and cut inside.

Murphy then raced onto a ball over the top to set up Howard Forinton, but Faultless saved with his feet.

And on 28 minutes he made a full-length save from a Forinton header off a Southern free-kick.

Wood made the breakthrough on 52 minutes, when Ollie Manuel could only parry Ahmet Bilgim's shot to Danny Forrest, who fired into the roof of the net.

Then Corey Curriethers found Max Black wide on the right, and he cleverly cut inside before setting up Bilgim to score with a vicious rising cross-shot.

And right on 90 minutes a free-kick from wide left found Curriethers on the right of the box. He cut inside and this time Manuel was beaten by the pace of the shot that flew in at the far post.

Spruce up for season

RUSHALL Cricket Club are finalising preparations for the new season.

Indoor cricket nets are continuing at Sheffield Community Academy Sports Centre on Friday evenings (8-9.30pm) with the club's qualified coaches making sure everybody is fully prepared for the first matches on Saturday, April 20.

Rushall will be sprucing up their ground the week before they take part in this year's Natwest CricketForce 2013.

The club will stage their CricketForce Day on Saturday, April 13. They are looking for donations of white paint, tin roofing sheets, cement mix, sand and gravel, to help maintain the clubhouse and facilities.

For more information call Paul Hopkinson on 07976 621825 or email rushallcricket@gmail.com



Flashback to Christopher Keane's 2009 ABA win

Champ is Keane to carry on fighting

by Craig Birch

MIDLANDS cruiserweight champion Christopher Keane will be back in action with a six-rounder at the top of the bill in Birmingham this month.

Walsall's Keane has been pencilled in to box at the Institute in Digbeth on Friday, April 26 in the main event, against a yet-to-be-specified opponent.

The 27-year-old ripped the area belt from Shane McPhilbin in January and floored the former British champion three times before a third-round stoppage. However,

the softly-spoken slugger is keeping his feet on the ground and wants rounds under his belt from his next ring assignment, despite a wide-open title race.

David Dolan lost a third shot at the British crown against Jon-Lewis Dickinson in February, while English champion China Clarke defends against Matty Askin on April 20.

But Keane is content to wait for the chance to add to another bona-

fide national title to the 2009 ABA super-heavyweight honours he won as an amateur.

He said: "I am in boxing to become a champion and, hopefully, there will be bigger and better things for me from now on."

"Everyone has to have their day and mine will come. I don't get bothered about recognition and the politics of boxing, it would just get me down."

"All I can do is train hard, keep on fighting and keep on winning. "I do my job, that's what I get paid

for. But I won't duck and dive, I will fight anybody."

McPhilbin had beaten Keane on points as an amateur. But he was blown away in a pro rematch, by a man who is growing into power with three stoppages in his last four fights.

Keane said: "I knew I was going to beat him, but the style I did it in shocked everyone. I think. But it's all on the night, it was my night and I managed to knock him out."

"Shane can box better than that, but I got to him and got the win."

Pics draw near third spot with late strike

**Rushall Olympic 2
Hednesford Town 2**

RUSHALL went a point off third place in the Evo-Stik Northern Premier after this derby draw with title hopefuls Hednesford.

Dave Walker gave them a lead after a Grant Beckett corner was cleared poorly to Lee Downes. He played in Walker who, back to goal, turned and drilled a low effort past Dan Crane.

However, a controversial corner saw a header from Sean O'Connor level it after 77 minutes. The referee deemed Josh Craddock got a touch on a Michael Lennon over-run although Pics felt there was no contact. John Disney's corner was headed in by substitute O'Connor.

Chris Gemmell's stunning saves kept out Aaron Rey and Lennon, but his misfortune gifted Hednesford a deserved lead with three minutes left.

A back-pass to him should have been dealt with easily – but with pitch conditions terrible, the ball bobbed, missed Gemmell's boot to gift Kyle Patterson a tap-in.

Wayne Daniel's header from Beckett's corner gave Rushall a point with a minute of normal time left.

It was some consolation for a lacklustre performance on Saturday as Rushall went down 2-1 at Grantham.

Adie Hawes gave the Gingerbreads the lead on the stroke of half-time and they doubled the lead 17 minutes from time as Greg Smith hit a 20-yard drive.

Rushall threatened repeatedly but only scored after four minutes of stoppage time, when a low cross-shot from Ahmed Obeng saw Hawes slide in an own goal.

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PLAY-OFFS UP FOR GRABS SAYS SMITH

BOSS Dean Smith reckons the promotion race is wide open and Walsall can still gate-crash the play-offs.

The Saddlers crushed Coventry 4-0 on Easter Monday to extend their unbeaten run to 12 games and now sit three points adrift of the top six.

Doubles from Jamie Paterson and Craig Westcarr earned Walsall their biggest win of the season ahead of Saturday's crunch visit of fourth placed Sheffield United.

With 10 points separating third-placed Brentford to MK Dons in 10th Smith reckons the League One play-offs are up for grabs.

"There are that many teams involved," he said, with Walsall eighth. "Orient have won and MK Dons won again you can't count anyone out. We're still the outsiders, but our run suggests we've got a chance."

"MK Dons are starting to win games again and have games in hand; Orient won and Yeovil won again."

"It depends on the fixtures now, who plays who and how they go. The likes of ourselves and Yeovil, who no-one expected to be up there, have taken the points off teams people fancied."

Victory saw revenge over the Sky Blues after Walsall's 5-1 mauling at the Ricoh in December – when they were 19th and three points above the drop zone.

Smith said: "The players felt hard done by when we played Coventry at their place and without me men-

tioning it to them, they wanted to put it right.

"We've played three games, got three clean sheets and I can't speak highly enough of the players. "Coventry are a good team, they have some really good players and there's no fluke when you beat a team like that 4-0."

Smith is confident 19-goal top scorer Will Grigg will be fit to face the Blades after sitting out with a sore hamstring.

The striker returned in Friday's 0-0 draw at Yeovil but failed to recover in time to face Coventry.

Smith added: "He's sore, he was always going to be."

"The Yeovil game was a gamble but one we thought was worth it and hopefully he'll be fit for Saturday."

"He played at 75 per cent against Yeovil and now we need to get him 100 per cent because when he is, he scores goals."

Wood keep up their race for title

WALSALL WOOD got back to Midland Combination Premier duty with three points in a 3-1 win at RC Warwick on Easter Monday. They led through Lewis Taylor Boyce and although Jack Banks levelled from a contentious free-kick, further goals from Leon Taylor and Corey Curriethers eased Wood to victory as they continued their title chase.

Record league victory just muddy marvellous

Walsall 93 Northwich 10

WALSALL were muddy marvels as they set a club record league victory.

Northwich, after two postponements, made their first-ever visit to Walsall's Delves Road ground for the Midlands One West clash. The hosts were soon into their stride with an early score by Harvey Wootton.

Winger Alex Greenslade produced a 50-metre touchline run and the ball was moved quickly as Matt Wood, Steve Halbert and Chris Mould combined together before the ball reached the Walsall centre who finished well.

The visitors worked their way into their opponents half, and gained their first score. No.8 Rick Smith did well off a retreating scrum and gave a well-timed pass to his fly-half Chris Dutoy who touched down.

Walsall hit back with a try after prolonged pressure. No.8 Daniel Simpson made a powerful burst then some superb passing put Greenslade away on a try scoring run. The home pack created the next score as flanker Max Hughes touched down after a strong scrum.

More good drives got the hosts another try within minutes. Greenslade made a good cross field run then the ball was switched to fly half Wood who gave a neat pass to Chris Mould. The full back did well to beat the covering defence from 25m.

The first half came to a close with two more Walsall tries. The second half started with a try virtually from the kick off and from then on the home side just kept piling on the misery for Northwich.



A relatively clean Matt Wood scores his third and final try in a tally of 33 points

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